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The Baptists — An Historical Account

By Frank S. Mead

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(Editor's Note: This is one of the most interesting sketches of Baptist history that we have ever read. Many Baptists, however, believe that there are closer ties between the dissenting groups of ancient times and modern Baptists than is acknowledged by Mr. Mead. Most of these holding that position, also dispute the theory that John Smith was actually a founder of Baptists. However, many modern Baptist historians do hold to practically the same general position presented by Mr. Mead. Questions concerning these matters, however, do not change the value of Mr. Mead's splendid narrative, and we felt it was worthy of presentation to our readers. The sub-heads have been inserted by the Baptist Record, and are not part of the original story.)

How old are the Baptists? Well, how old are the hills? One date is as hard to determine, to pin down, as another: one beginning is as obscure as the next. That's exceptional. For men and institutions, usually, are quite sure of their birthplaces and dates. The Methodist is sure; there is John Wesley, and Charles. The Lutheran knows; he has his Luther, his Wittenberg. The Presbyterian has Calvin and Geneva. But the Baptists! Say some of them, "We have no founder but Jesus; we were born the day He stood with the Baptist, knee-deep in Jordan. We recognize no human authority, no human creed. Our faith was here, functioning, before the first pope came to Rome; we were Protestant before the Reformation, before Luther was born." Say others, "We began with John Smyth in 1606." What manner of Church is this? A company of saints without a patriarch, or with many? A lesser breed without the law?

Hardly that. Let's put it this way. There were many Democrats before Thomas Jefferson, but the Democratic party began with him. Just so there were many Baptists before Smyth, but their origin as a denomination began with him, in 1606. Driven out on purely historical grounds to prove the case, the "Jordan-birthplace" Baptist is hard put to it to show an unbroken succession of churches from then till now. His churches came irregularly, unconnected one with the other. But he is quite within reason in claiming that his principles are as old as Christ in Jordan. And what are those principles?

Baptist Principles
Baptism! That's first. Baptism of believers. There is no warrant for infant baptism in Scripture, he says. (Nor is there.) Baptism of believers only. Baptism is a public oath of loyalty to Christ, to the Baptist mind, and no babe can take that.

Loyalty to the Scriptures as the final authority! That, to some, is even more important than baptism of believers. No pope, no cardinal, can dictate here; there are no Baptist bishops. Not the Creeds, nor the Confessions. The Scriptures! They hold to that as they hold to Jesus Christ as the lone Lawgiver and King over Church and conscience.

The independence of the local church! What they aim at is not an airtight ecclesiastical organization; what they want is Christian character. Each group of worshippers may ordain, call, dismiss, believe as they will, run their church as they wish. Preacher and laymen have equal power; this is a democracy. If individuality ever had a chance, it has it here.

Complete separation of Church and State! They have never been a State Church, never taken orders from any government or king; in their blood is an eternal insistence that the State shall rule only in affairs political and let the Church alone. They are God's patriots, putting allegiance to Him always above allegiance to Caesar. Freedom of conscience and complete divorce of Church and State! How they have suffered for that! They have faced mockery and mud, fines, whippings and iron bars; they have been burned at the stakes and pulled on the rack, but they have held to it. Their

torturers might as well have expected a man to walk without a head as to expect to tear that out of the Baptist. And note this, and remember it: never once in their bitter, bloody history have they struck back at their persecutors, or persecuted any other for his faith. That is patriotism touched by the divine.

In one form or another, with one isolated group or another, these ideas persisted through the centuries following Jesus. Heroic groups appeared, here or there, advocating one or all of these basic Baptist principles. But it would be a rash man who would call any of them strictly Baptist groups. He would be a poor scholar who would attempt to trace the Baptists, on available historical evidence, further back, as an organized church, than the twelfth century; he would be a better scholar if he started with the sixteenth. Be it enough to say here that the modern Baptist is the child of the sixteenth-century Anabaptist, the grandchild of the twelfth-century Waldensian.

Waldensians
Nonconformists of first water were the Waldensians; they broke step in the twelfth century with the Roman Catholic Church and were never whipped into line again. They took their name from Peter Waldo of Lyons, who made a fortune and gave it away when he read Christ's advice to the rich young ruler. Coupled with his belief in poverty was his belief that the people should be evangelized in their own language. So he had translators put to work to make the Scriptures readable and took over the evangelizing himself. He won disciples and imposed upon them an iron discipline; he made of them the most obstinate heretics ever chastized by the rods of Rome. Rome drove them out into the caves and valleys of the Alps; they came back when Rome grew tired and went on preaching their way. Today there are fifteen thousand of them.

Waldensian code and doctrine are hard to classify, for they were not a unit in belief. Some retained much Catholic doctrine, with teachers, priests and bishops; others were congregational in polity and highly evangelical, rejecting transubstantiation and all sacramental grace and infant baptism. These evangelists filtered into Switzerland and Germany, where they deeply influenced the Anabaptists.

The Ana Baptists
Now the Anabaptists ("those who baptize again," or "rebaptizers") were the left wing of the Reformation; they were vagrant seeds in a vagrant wind, wild tares in the field of Rome, shooting up suddenly, unexpectedly, everywhere. Their enemies tried laughing at them, but soon gave it up; the Anabaptist was more dangerous than laughable. Advocating communism, pacifism and the abolition of capital punishment, they rejected infant baptism as contrary to Scripture and asserted the freedom of the soul and the conscience; they demanded the separation of Church and State, refused to take an oath in court, or even to hold civic office, and stood against the payment of taxes and interest on money loaned! That was about as far to the left as any reformer could go; it made them not only heretics to the Church, but rebels to



THE FIRST BAPTIST MEETING HOUSE—Erected 1775, Providence, Rhode Island.

the State. Popes and princes went after them with fire and sword; every great Protestant reformer wrote and spoke against them.

Luther condemned them in Germany when they took the part of the people in the Peasants' War of 1525, advising the princes to "knock down, strangle and stab" them without mercy. That's easy to understand. Luther feared, more than anything else, a war at the heart of his movement of reform: the Anabaptists, on the other hand, in view of their principles, could not help joining in this upheaval for human rights, on the side of the oppressed. Luther, for all his greatness, left the Church still chained to the chariot wheels of the State. The Anabaptist could never stand for that. Hence, he fought with the peasants; hence, he parted with the Lutherans and the Zwinglians and moved on alone, guarding his peculiar heritage, resolved to win with it or die in the attempt.

In Switzerland the Anabaptists were moderate, careful, scholarly. Their leaders were constructive; they translated the Old Testament into German years before Luther thought of it; when persecution drove them from Switzerland, they wrote and preached in Moravia.

The Italian group was short-lived, probably because Rome is in Italy. Driven out, they disappeared in Poland.

The Dutch Anabaptists were ultraradical. Led by Melchior Hoffman, they created a shambles of fanaticism in Munster,

committing a series of excesses and outrages which have burdened the whole Anabaptist movement with a mark of shame it never deserved. The result was catastrophic war and bloodshed; a remnant reorganized themselves as Mennonites.

Mennonites
When we reach the Mennonites, we have reached the seventeenth century; and when we reach the seventeenth century, we reach the first of the immediate ancestors of the Baptists. Menno Simons, a priest who deserted the Catholics in 1536 for the Anabaptists, taught that the Scriptures alone were the authority of man's faith and practice; that baptism was a believer's privilege; that church discipline was to be rigorously enforced in business, in the family and in all personal affairs. The limits to which he and his followers went in this matter of discipline were absurd. Be that as it may, the Mennonites were (and still are) a gentle, peaceful, law-abiding, virtuous people. And persistent. The men of Menno knew no discouragement; they plowed through the snows of Russia, they climbed the mountains of Switzerland, they pleaded their cause in the streets of Leipzig and on the dikes of Amsterdam. Somewhere near those dikes they met the English refugee Separatists; somewhere, near there, they met John Smyth and Thomas Helwys and John Morton.

English Baptists
Now Smyth and Helwys and Morton were greeted gladly by the Mennonites in Holland; these men were forged of their own brand of Mennonite steel, blades cut to order for their cause. Smyth had been vicar at Gainsborough; Gainsborough was not far from Scrooby, where Bradford and Brewster lived. He came to Holland in 1606, fleeing James I; by 1609 he had been won over by the Mennonite argument and he was a thoroughgoing Baptist. He rebaptized himself, then Helwys, then the rest of them and organized, on the spot, the first English General Baptist Church (general, because they believed in a general atonement, for all men). All went well until Smyth tried to lead his followers over, en masse, into the fold of the Mennonites. That was too much for Helwys and Morton; Baptist or no Baptist, they could never go that far. They were still

Englishmen. They excommunicated Smyth, who died in 1612 and who wrote, in the very year of his death, in a Confession for his faithful followers, his conviction that "The magistrate, by virtue of his office, is not to meddle with religion, or matters of conscience, nor to compel men to this or that form of religion or doctrine, but to leave the Christian religion to the free conscience of every one, and to meddle only with political matters."

So he went down to the gates of death with his colors flying, staunch Baptist to the end. Helwys and Morton returned to England to "face the music" of persecution for their faith, if need be, and to win, if God please, a few recruits before they died.

They suffered little if at all. The persecutions of James had run their course and only a few, after 1612, paid the drastic penalty. Joan Boucher had been burned for heresy in 1550; Edward Wrightman, the last of the English to die at the stake, was burned in 1611; between the two were scores of others who witnessed with their lives, who paid fines or went to exile or the whipping-post. But the fury had waned by 1612 and the road lay open to the converts of Menno. Probably, Mennonites roamed England before Helwys and Morton came back. If they did, they were not amazingly successful. But they did sow Anabaptist seeds and prepare the soil for later growth.

Two Groups
By 1638, the first Particular Baptist Church (Particular, because they believed in a particular or limited atonement, for the elect alone) was organized on English soil; in 1641, another group broke from the General branch, convinced that the only correct form of baptism was baptism by immersion. In 1644 these "immersion" Baptists wrote their famous Confession of Faith, which is a guide to millions of Baptists to this day, in which they called themselves "Anabaptists," but for which they came to be called, for the first time in history, Baptists.

Through the subsequent periods of storm and quiet in English history the two branches of the Baptists, wending their separate ways, contributing lavishly to the enrichment of English life and character. Consistently, they maintained their own freedom; consistently, they kept hammering into the Englishman a love of liberty in all things. For that the English owe a debt to the Baptists they can never pay. They, more than any other, more than Alfred or Henry or the Iron Duke, made England free. And more than Cromwell. Indeed, the Baptists coached Cromwell! As a prelude to the Revolution, the Confession of 1644 declared that "... concerning the worship of God, there is but one lawgiver... which is Jesus Christ. ... So it is the magistrates' duty to tender the liberty of men's consciences (which is the tenderest thing unto all conscientious men...) and to protect all under them from all wrong, injury, oppression, and molestation."

Cherishing that and with generations behind them having given their lives for it, it was natural that they should flock into the army of Cromwell as they had flocked to the Peasants' Revolt. In the Protector's Irish garrison in 1755, there were twelve Baptist governors of cities, ten colonels, three lieutenant-colonels, ten majors, fourty-three company officers. A daughter of Cromwell married Colonel Fleetwood, a Baptist. By the thousands, they stood with Cromwell against the King and did as much as any Roundhead to send a shudder across every throne in Europe when they sent King Charles I to the headsman. And they stood against Cromwell himself and Presbyterian intolerance when Cromwell had won and come to power. One of their poets (Milton) broke out in righteous indignation at the intolerance of the victors:

"New Presbyter is but old Priest writ large," and threw a challenge into their teeth: "Dare ye for this adjoin the civil sword, To force our consciences, that Christ set free And ride us with a classic hierarchy?" They opposed Cromwell when he considered taking the throne and they cheered him when he refused it. They were fighting for a principle, not for any man. They were God's patriots more than England's.

Great Contribution
They showered England with great men, great deeds, before they joined Particular and General branches into one, in 1801. They gave her the soldiers of her Revolution, her

mighty men of peace; they provided Bunyan and his Pilgrim's Progress, written in Bedford jail; blind Milton and Paradise Lost, written in darkness; they produced Daniel Defoe and his Robinson Crusoe; Alexander McClaren and A. J. Gordon and Robert Hall and Spurgeon the incomparable, preachers all. They gave England Andrew Fuller, in whose home was formed (in 1792) the English Baptist Missionary Society, and William Carey, the father of modern missions.

Let's divide the honors equally. Let's say that the Particular Baptists' greatest gift was Carey, who "has done more to make the India of today than Clive or Hastings, and contributed to the making of England hardly less than John Wesley" and that the General Baptists' greatest gift was Robert Williams, who contributed to the making of the United States hardly less than any dozen presidents.

Roger Williams
Roger Williams was born with a tempest for a heart. From the cradle, he belonged, body and soul, to the Men-Who-Couldn't - And - Wouldn't - Fit - In. He graduated from Cambridge, brilliantly, and was sought by more than one good English parish when he took orders in the Church. He was a liberal churchman and a Separatist who boasted of it. That was his trouble; he never could keep things to himself. On a bleak fifth of February, 1631 he landed at Boston, after "a tempestuous voyage." He surely loved that trip, surely walked the deck in the gale with the rain on his face and the wild wind in his hair, peering ahead to

what he'd do there. Boston welcomed him with open arms, for he had a reputation; he was "a young minister, godly and zealous, having precious gifts." But he also had a mind of his own and a loose tongue with which to speak his mind. Hardly had he landed when he clashed with the Boston clergy; he advocated views quite out of sympathy with the ecclesiastical status quo. He refused to join the Boston church, for it was still too close, he thought, to the corruptions of the Church of England. Then the church at Salem called him and he accepted. But on the day he was to go, the Boston General Court interfered (which it had no right to do) and told the young rebel he couldn't stay in Salem. So he went on to Plymouth instead, where he preached for two years. He came to know some Indians there, some Narragansett chiefs and the Narragansett language.

In 1634 the church at Salem called him again and this time he went. Salem sat back and waited; this would be preaching worth listening to. It was. Soon Salem sat up and stared; this was explosive preaching, a theology charged with dynamite, dealing recklessly with Church and State and questioning the power of the Massachusetts police courts to deal with anything or anyone religious. The Boston Council got busy; John Cotton preferred charges. Yes, said Williams, the charges were true. He had said that the Puritans should have a patent from the Indians and not from the King for the land they lived on; he opposed wicked persons taking an oath, or praying, for these were acts of God's worship; he held that it was unlawful for the people to hear any of the ministers from the Parish assemblies of old England and that the power of the civil magistrates extended only "to the bodies, and goods, and outward state of men." What else, pray, could he think, or say? Outwardly, he wore the garb of a Puritan minister; inwardly, he was a Baptist.

Exile
The Salem church stood by him, but General Court had its way; Williams was exiled. The magistrates planned to ship him back to England; a ship rode at anchor in Boston Bay, ready for him. "But when they came at his house, they

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The Baptist Faith And Message

Our Articles of Faith

The Southern Baptist Convention in 1924 appointed a committee consisting of E. Y. Mullins, Chairman, S. M. Brown, W. J. McGlothlin, E. C. Dargan, and L. R. Scarborough to consider the advisability of issuing a Statement of the Baptist Faith and Message. That Committee presented at the meeting of the Convention in 1925 the New Hampshire Confession of Faith revised at certain points and with some additional articles growing out of present needs.

In presenting their report they declared that "the present occasion for a reaffirmation of Christian fundamentals is the prevalence of naturalism in the modern teaching and preaching of religion. Christianity is supernatural in its origin and history. We repudiate every theory of religion which denies the supernatural elements in our faith."

Introductory to the doctrinal articles which they submitted, they recommended to the Convention the following statements of the historic Baptist conception of the nature and function of confessions of faith in our religious and denominational life. The Convention adopted the suggestions, believing with the Committee that such a statement will clarify the atmosphere and remove some causes of misunderstanding, friction, and apprehension. We quote the statement in full as to Confessions of Faith:

"(1) That they constitute a consensus of opinion of some Baptist body, large or small, for the general instruction and guidance of our own people and others concerning those articles of the Christian faith which are most surely held among us. They are not intended to add anything to the simple conditions of salvation revealed in the New Testament, viz., repentance towards God and faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

"(2) That we do not regard them as complete statements of our faith, having any quality of finality or infallibility. As in the past so in the future, Baptists should hold themselves free to revise their statements of faith as may seem to them wise and expedient at any time.

"(3) That any group of Baptists, large or small, have the inherent right to draw up for themselves and publish to the world a confession of their faith whenever they may think it advisable to do so.

"(4) That the sole authority for faith and practice among Baptists is the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Confessions are only guides in interpretation, having no authority over the conscience.

"(5) That they are statements of religious convictions, drawn from the Scriptures, and are not to be used to hamper freedom of thought or investigation in other realms of life."

The following pages contain the doctrinal articles adopted by the Convention in session at Memphis, Tennessee, on May 14, 1925, together with the Scripture references later furnished by the chairman of the committee to the Senior Secretary of the Convention.

I. The Scriptures

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which

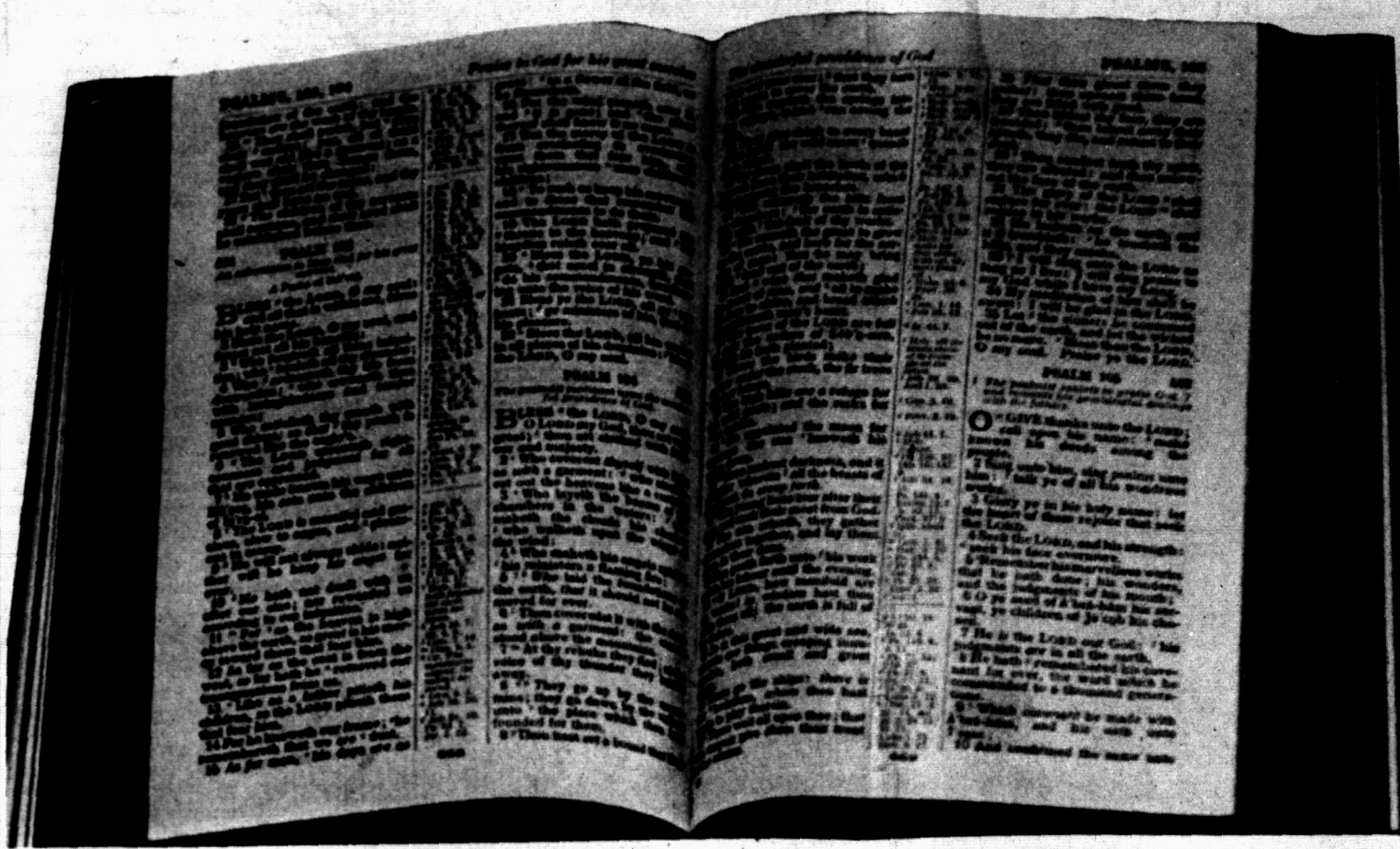
God will judge us; and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and religious opinions should be tried.

II. God

There is one and only one living and true God, an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe, infinite in holiness and all other perfections, to whom we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. He is revealed to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

III. The Fall of Man

Man was created by the special act of God, as recorded in Genesis. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen. 1:27). "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breath-



ed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7).

He was created in a state of holiness under the law of his Maker, but, through the temptation of Satan, he transgressed the command of God and fell from his original holiness and righteousness; whereby his posterity inherit a nature corrupt and in bondage to sin, are under condemnation, and as soon as they are capable of moral action, become actual transgressors.

IV. The Way of Salvation

The salvation of sinners is wholly of grace, through the mediatorial office of the Son of God, who by the Holy Spirit was born of the Virgin Mary and took upon him our nature, yet without sin; honored the divine law by his personal obedience and made atonement for our sins by his death. Being risen from the dead, he is now enthroned in Heaven, and uniting in his person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, he is in every way qualified to be a compassionate and all-sufficient Savior.

V. Justification

Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of righteousness of all sinners who believe in Christ. This blessing is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but through the redemption that is in and through Jesus Christ. It brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other needed blessing.

VI. The Freedom of Salvation

The blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel. It is the duty of all to accept them by penitent and obedient faith. Nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner except his own voluntary refusal to accept Jesus Christ as teacher, Savior and Lord.

VII. Regeneration

Regeneration or the new birth is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit, whereby we become partakers of the divine nature and a holy disposition is given, leading to the love and practice of righteousness. It is a work of God's free grace conditioned upon faith in Christ and made manifest by the fruit which we bring forth to the glory of God.

VIII. Repentance and Faith

We believe that repentance and faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God; whereby being deeply convicted of our guilt, danger, and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy; at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest, and King, and relying on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Savior.

IX. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which he regenerates, sanctifies and saves sinners. It is perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility. It en-

courages the use of means in the highest degree.

Sanctification

Sanctification is the process by which the regenerate gradually attain to moral and spiritual perfection through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in their hearts. It continues throughout the earthly life, and is accomplished by the use of all the ordinary means of grace, and particularly by the Word of God.

XI. Perseverance

All real believers endure to the end. Their continuance in well-doing is the mark which distinguishes them from mere professors. A special Providence cares for them, and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

XII. A Gospel Church

A church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by his laws, and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Its Scriptural officers are bishops, or elders, and deacons.

XIII. Baptism And The Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The act is a symbol of our faith in a crucified, buried and risen Saviour. It is prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation and to the Lord's Supper, in which the members of the church, by the use of bread and wine, commemorate the dying love of Christ.

XIV. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should be employed in exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private, and by refraining from worldly amusements, and resting from secular employments, works of necessity and mercy only excepted.

XV. The Righteous and the Wicked

There is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and wicked. Those only who are justified through the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and sanctified by the Holy Spirit are truly righteous in his sight. Those who continue in impenitence and unbelief are in his sight wicked and are under condemnation. This distinction between the righteous and the wicked holds in and after death, and will be made manifest at the judgment when final and everlasting awards are made to all men.

XVI. The Resurrection

The Scriptures clearly teach that Jesus rose from the dead. His grave was emptied of its contents. He appeared to the disciples after his resurrection in many convincing manifestations. He now exists in his glorified body at God's right hand. There will be a resurrection of the righteous and the wicked. The bodies of the righteous will conform to the glorious spiritual body of Jesus.

XVII. The Return Of The Lord

The New Testament teaches in many places the visible and personal return of Jesus to this earth. "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into

heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." The time of his coming is not revealed. "Of that day and hour knoweth no one, no, not the angels in heaven, but my Father only" (Matt. 24:36). It is the duty of all believers to live in readiness for his coming and by diligence in good works to make manifest to all men the reality and power of their hope in Christ.

XVIII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and he has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to his Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to the church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render the loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The

church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

XIX. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the pure gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of his teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of his

law of love.

We urge Christian people throughout the world to pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace, and to oppose everything likely to provoke war.

XX. Education

Christianity is the religion of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is therefore a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. An adequate system of schools is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people. The cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is coordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches.

XXI. Social Service

Every Christian is under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ regnant in his own life and in human society; to oppose in the spirit of Christ every form of greed, selfishness, and vice; to provide for the orphaned, the aged, the helpless, and the sick, to seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth and brotherly love; to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and his truth. All means and methods used in social service for the amelioration of society and the establishment of righteousness among men must finally depend on the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Christ Jesus.

XXII. Co-Operation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure co-operation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over each other or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our

people in the most effective manner. Individual members of New Testament churches should co-operate with each other, and the churches themselves should co-operate with each other in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent program for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary co-operation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. It is permissible and desirable as between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such co-operation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and his Word as revealed in the New Testament.

XXIII. Evangelism And Missions

It is the duty of every Christian man and woman, and the duty of every church of Christ to seek to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life. It is also expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by personal effort and by other methods sanctioned by the gospel of Christ.

XXIV. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to him. We have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world; a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in our possessions. We are therefore under obligation to serve him with our time, talents and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to us to use for the glory of God and helping others. Christians should cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally contribute of their means to advancing the Redeemer's cause on earth.

XXV. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God is the reign of God in the heart and life of the individual in every human relationship, and in every form and institution of organized human society. The chief means for promoting the Kingdom of God on earth are preaching the gospel of Christ, and teaching the principles of righteousness contained therein. The Kingdom of God will be complete when every thought and will of man should be brought into captivity to the will of Christ. And it is the duty of all Christ's people to pray and labor continually that his Kingdom may come and his will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

The Historic Baptist Position

By Selsus E. Tull,

Retired Pastor

Pine Bluff, Arkansas

The expression "The Historic Baptist Position" seems to have been bandied around considerably in the doctrinal debate in the recent Southern Baptist Convention in San Francisco. It might be a good time now, after things have cooled off some, to elaborate somewhat on this subject for the enlightenment of some among us who seem to discount the supreme importance of The Baptist Historical Position as it relates to the appeal of present-day Baptists to the religious world. If the Baptists hold no position in history then it will be harder for them to maintain any "position" in the present world confusion!

This is truly an important subject. Many books have been written on the subject, and much has been said about it in encyclopedias and other collateral literature. The earnest and sympathetic study may easily find the facts without great research.

A fact becomes "historic" after it has transpired. The word "historic" and the word "monumental" contain the same meaning. Both terms designate an indelible stamp on the pages of the past which cannot be erased or blotted out. Facts recorded in history have to be accepted and cannot be denied.

Tracing Baptist Position The way to trace the Baptist "Position" in history is to look for certain persistent beliefs held by certain groups of people in all past Christian ages who have consistently and monumentally remained throughout all the vicissitudes and revolutions in history, and for which millions have died in their allegiance to this belief.

If we find that the Baptists of today, as distinct from all other religious denominations, are the advocates and protagonists of these same beliefs, then there is but one inevitable conclusion, which is, that the Baptists of today are the heirs and inheritors of these distinctive beliefs which have been asserted and maintained through the blood and martyr-

doms of past Christian ages. Here, then, is the basis upon which the expression "The Baptist Historic Position" is so justly founded.

Some Basic Beliefs

Let us illustrate by naming at least a few of these beliefs which are so indelibly stamped on the face of Christian history and which today so distinctly characterize the beliefs and practices of our Baptist people.

1st. The absolute deity of Jesus Christ, his virgin birth, and his vicarious death on the cross for the sins of mankind.

This belief repudiates every claim of covenantal or sacramental efficacy from any other source, and makes Jesus Christ and Him alone as the only hope of the world's salvation.

2nd. The Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God and is the sole and all-sufficient authority over individuals and over the government of the Churches.

This belief disrobes all popes, priests, and presiding elders. It makes all men equal before God before salvation and all Christians equal among themselves after salvation.

3rd. There are just two Church Ordinances set up in the New Testament - Baptism and The Lord's Supper - that both of these ordinances are strictly symbolic in their meaning - that none but the saved are eligible to participate in them.

This belief repudiates all claims of saving efficacy or sacramental grace in the New Testament Ordinances.

4th. That New Testament Churches are composed strictly of saved and baptized people, and are directed in their activities by the Holy Spirit of God, and are, therefore, not subject or accountable to any civil or ecclesiastical authority.

This belief repudiates all hierarchisms, and makes absolute and complete separation of Church and State.

5th. That no person is qualified for Church membership until he is saved; that the ordinance of Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water

by Church authority to symbolize the death burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

This belief repudiates all practices of sprinkling for baptism as well as the practice of infant baptism.

This is but to name a few beliefs which have persisted in the convictions of multitudes throughout all Christian history since the personal ministry of Jesus Christ who set up The New Testament Church during His earthly ministry, and commissioned it to preach His Gospel to all nations throughout all ages.

The Baptist Position

Now, when we look upon the beliefs and "Position" of our Baptist people today and find that they are following the same path which is so monumentally emblazoned on the face of all Christian history then we realize what is meant by the expression "The Baptist Historic Position!"

This "Position" is unique in Christian history, and has set out what the Baptists believe today in clear distinctiveness from all other interpretations as the ideal of Jesus for His people in carrying His program forward in the world. This "Position" remains unique in the religious realm today. It remains the only significant reason for the Baptists to maintain a separate denominational existence in the world today. The present age would suffer irretrievable loss should present-day Baptists fail to appreciate the historical inheritance of truth and responsibility which have been bequeathed to them by those who have fought and died for their "position" in less favored ages than this.

Instead of present-day Baptists disputing among themselves they should unite in humble pride and supreme dedication, and thank God that history has made it possible, under the direction and power of God, for there to exist in the world today a people called BAPTISTS whose unique "Position" before the world is to proclaim the majesty of God's Word which contains the only hope for this lost and despairing world!

Historical Shelter Dedication

The Mississippi Baptist Historical Shelter and Exhibit, located on Highway 61 South, will be dedicated in appropriate ceremonies Sunday, Oct. 28.

The principal speaker will be Dr. Davis C. Woolley, Executive Secretary of the Southern Baptist Historical Commission, Nashville, Tenn.

The shelter, several years in the making, will commemorate the old Salem (Cole's Creek) Baptist Church, the first Baptist Church, to be constituted in the state. Its date of birth was 1791.

The shelter is located five miles south of Fayette at the junction of Highway 61 and Stempley Road.

Lee To Preside

Presiding over the service, to begin at 2:30, will be Rev. George Lee, pastor of Fayette Baptist Church and chairman of the Executive Committee of the Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission.

Rev. J. L. Boyd, Clinton, Executive Secretary of the Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission, will tell of the history of the old Salem church and the development of the shelter.

The shelter contains many photos and other items of historical interest regarding the old Salem church and the early development of Baptist work in southwest Mississippi.

This is another in a series of projects of the State Baptist Historical Commission designed to preserve the heritage of Baptists in the state. The Commission is an agency of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

What Makes a Person a Baptist

THE BAPTIST RECORD 3

Thursday, October 25, 1962

Baptist History

By James P. Boyce
(Founder of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary)

But the obligation resting on the Baptist denomination is far higher than this. It extends not merely to matters of detail, but to those of vital interest. The history of religious literature and of Christian scholarship has been a history of Baptist wrongs. We have been overlooked, ridiculed, and defamed. Critics have committed the grossest perversions, violated the plainest rules of criticism, and omitted points which could not have been developed without benefit to us. Historians who have professed to write the history of the church have either utterly ignored the presence of those of our faith, or classed them among fanatics and heretics; or, if forced to acknowledge the prevalence of our principles and practice among the earliest churches, have adopted such false theories as to church power, and the development and growth of the truth and principles of Scripture, that by all, save their most discerning readers, our pretensions to an early origin and a continuous existence have been rejected.

The Baptists in the past have been entirely too indifferent to the position they thus occupy. They have depended too much upon the known strength of their principles, and the ease with which from Scripture they could defend them. They have therefore neglected many of those means which extensive learning affords and which have been used to great advantage in support of other opinions. It is needless to say, gentlemen, that we can no longer consent to occupy this position. We owe a change to ourselves, — as Christians, bound to show an adequate reason for the difference between us and others; as men of even moderate scholarship, that it may appear that we have not made the gross error in philology and criticism which we must have made if we be not right; as the successors of a glorious spiritual ancestry, illustrated by heroic martyrdom by the profession of noble principles, by the maintenance of true doctrines; as the church of Christ, which he has ever preserved as the witness for his truth, by which he has illustrated his wonderful ways, and shown that his promises are sure and steadfast. Nay, we owe it to Christ himself, whose truth we hold so distinctively as to separate us from all others of his believing people; to whom we look confidently to make these principles triumphant; for whose sake, on their account, men have been ever found among us willing to submit to banishment, imprisonment, or martyrdom; and for whose sake, in defence of the same truth, we are willing now to bear the scorn and reproach, not of the world only, but even of those who love our Lord Jesus Christ. (Memoir of James P. Boyce, pp. 136, 137)

Definition Of A Baptist

By W. W. Bottoms, Editor
The Baptist Times, London

Those Christians who hold the evangelical faith of the Christian gospel, that "by grace are ye saved through faith", and the priesthood of all believers; who practice the sacrament of believers' baptism and the Lord's Supper, and share in the fellowship of believers, the Church; and who are willing to be called or designated Baptists, though regarding themselves as part of the one holy, catholic Church of Christ.

Making Baptists

By A. T. Robertson

"Give a man an open Bible, an open mind, a conscience in good working order, and he will have a hard time to keep from being a Baptist." (A. T. Robertson, A Biography, Sill, P. 181)

The government of Rhode Island was the first in the world to clearly and fully embody the principles of religious liberty. This was due to Roger Williams, a Baptist preacher.

John D. Rockefeller, the richest man in the world, was a Baptist, and gave more to the cause of education than any other man, dead or living.

The first two presidents of Harvard College were Baptists, and Thomas Hollis, a Baptist, gave \$20,000 to the endowment.

What Makes Persons Baptist

By Robert G. Lee, D. D.
Pastor Emeritus, Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, Tennessee

Persons are genuine Baptists WHEN:

They are born again — "not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God" (I Peter 1:23)—believing that being born from above, you can not be unborn from below;

They believe all the Bible is God's Word — inerrant in statement, regenerative in power, personal in application, harmonious in infinite complexity, Holy-Spirit inspired in totality;

They disagree strongly but kindly with what people of other faiths believe;

They censure Christianly and repudiate doctrinal deviates who minimize great Bible doctrines—modifying and perverting Bible truths until these truths lose semblance of their original meaning and intent, as these deviates substitute a "Thus saith the mind of man" for a "Thus saith the Lord God";

They believe and contend for individual rights, not close ecclesiastical rights; personal, not proxy, faith; free, not sacramental grace; priesthood of all believers, not of a class; believers', not infant, baptism; voluntary, not coercive principle in religion;

They believe that a church is a local, self-governing, independent, democratic body of immersed believers in Christ, equal in rank and privilege, associated under covenant, administering its own affairs under Christ's headship—setting forth, by precept and example, immersion only as answering to Christ's command as to baptism and the symbolic meaning of the ordinance as well as the order of the two church ordinances — the initial ordinance being baptism, the recurrent ordinance being the Lord's Supper, and both of divine appointment;

They believe in the right of each church member to a voice in its government and discipline — the local church holding fellowship with other churches, but solely responsible to Jesus Christ;

They believe in freedom of the individual conscience and total independence of Church and State — the State never having jurisdiction over the church nor right to interfere with its work, no financial grants to be received from the State, no taxes levied for the support of the ministry, the church rejecting all appointments made by the State, obeying the laws of the country, insofar as they do not conflict with the Word of God;

They believe Christians, being good stewards in money matters, should love God with their pocket books;

Believing in direct, not indirect, approach to God, they believe in no human mediator between God and man; in sin no sacrifice but Calvary, in the throne of Grace as the only confessional; in all things no authority but the Bible;

They believe that in daily living Christians should be "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body" (II Corinthians 4:10).

A Baptist Distinctive

By Leo Eddleman, President

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

A major Baptist distinctive is resident in the name itself. It is traditionally known as, "The baptism of responsible believers by immersion upon a profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour." Holding to the implications of "responsible baptism" is a chief cause of the denomination's vitality.

The word "responsible" eliminates infants and should eliminate the uncommitted and insincere. It magnifies the personal freedom of the believer and is diametrically opposed to the idea that the church and state are coextensive as in Italy and Spain. Baptists are most unwise when they make it too easy for a person to "make a decision" and "join the church." The baptism of responsible believers only should shut off clap-trap evangelism, a cheapened concept of Christian living, and unconverted members on the church roll.

"By immersion" dramatizes the doctrines without which Christianity would not have come into being. Immersion (from the Greek baptizo) means to submerge or bury in water (Romans 6:4). This pictures the death and burial of Christ. It, therefore, symbolizes the atonement and forgiveness purchased on the cross. Raising the believer up out of the water pictures the resurrection of Christ, which supplied the irrepressible dynamic for early Christians. All believers are thus to walk in "newness of life" (Romans 6:5) which implies Christ-like conduct and social responsibility. Baptism is a way of boldly confessing to the world, "Look! Standing here in this water I am about to make a picture of that in which I have trusted for my salvation: Christ in his death and resurrection."

Further, New Testament baptism symbolizes regeneration or the new birth. It portrays the supernatural aspect of conversion which has transpired in the believer's heart: death to sin and resurrection to a new life.

Implicit in "responsible" baptism is the right to private interpretation of the Scriptures. Baptists have articulated this principle against a background of widely practiced christening (not a New Testament word) of infants on the part of both Protestants and Catholics. One abuses this right, therefore, by assuming it justifies him in repudiating the doctrines of regeneration, atonement, resurrection, new birth, and other basic truths loyalty to which brought this precious privilege to us in the first place. In an age claiming that the Bible is unimportant, that supplants love with brutality and indifference, that says traditional hierarchies may take precedence over the Word of God, that calls for ecumenical "togetherness" regardless of faith and convictions, the lordship of Christ is imperative. "Why call ye me Lord, Lord and do not the things I say?"

What Makes A Person A Baptist?

W. Fred Kendall, Executive Secretary
Tennessee Baptist Convention

A real experience of regeneration must be based on real conviction of sin, true repentance which involves a judgment of sin and a change of the whole attitude toward sin, acceptance of Christ's atoning work as the only hope of forgiveness and reconciliation to God. This is the first step in becoming a Baptist.

Baptism follows the experience of regeneration. Baptism is only valid as to the true commitment made by the act. It can only be by immersion and is a symbol of the spiritual experience of death to sin, burial of the old life of sin, resurrection to a new life with Christ. Sprinkling, pouring, infant baptism, and all sacramental theories are rejected.

Each individual soul is responsible to God and must respond to the call of God in his own right. This means that each individual is his own priest.

It means that God considers each soul competent to respond to God concerning all spiritual needs and in spiritual fellowship. This rejects all forms of proxy religion in one acting for another.

Each church is a fellowship of believers. Christ is the head and the only head. The New Testament is the authority for all faith and practice and must serve as the final test of guidance.



What Is A Baptist?

By Jack L. Gritz, Editor
The Baptist Messenger, Oklahoma

What does it take to make a Baptist? Does accepting Christ as Savior, being immersed and joining a Baptist church make a person a Baptist? Or is more than that required?

At the risk of being misunderstood and of offending some of our readers who have never thought much on the subject before, we wish to state without a moment's hesitation and as emphatically as possible that more is required!

Being a Baptist really means to hold certain beliefs and to be dedicated to certain great principles. As someone has well said, "When you become a Baptist you don't just join a church, you join a cause."

Baptists hold some beliefs in common with all other Christian people. But only Baptists have the particular principles and in the particular combination by which the people bearing this name have been characterized through the centuries and are characterized today.

Among principles which Baptists hold are the following:

- (1) Each individual is to come directly to God for himself.
- (2) The Bible is the final authority in all matters of faith and practice.
- (3) Salvation is by faith in Christ alone without human merit or works of any kind.
- (4) Baptism is the immersion in water of believers only.
- (5) A church is a local, independent, democratic body of baptized believers.
- (6) There should be religious liberty for all people.
- (7) There should be complete separation of church and state at all times.

Some others may hold one or more of these principles, but only Baptists hold and emphasize all of them. In addition to being saved, immersed and joining a Baptist church, believing in these historic Baptist principles and being dedicated to them make a person a Baptist.

For these principles our spiritual forefathers sacrificed and died. Others is a noble heritage from the past. May God help us to be as true in our time to these principles as those who have gone before us were in theirs!

What Makes Us Baptist?

By Ralph A. Herring, Director
Seminary Extension Department

Thanks for your timely question, What makes us Baptists? My first answer must be: Joining a Baptist church makes us Baptists. I say this because the name is not one we chose but one which others gave to us. Their opinion must be considered. Regardless of the circumstances under which we were received into the church, whether saved or not, whether committed to the lordship of Jesus or not, the moment we were received into the membership of a local Baptist church, that moment we became Baptists in the eyes of the world. In this sense, I might add, one stays Baptist as long as his name is carried on the roll of a Baptist church — whether an active or inactive, resident or non-resident member.

There is another answer to your question, and I shall try to give that, too, but this is the first answer and honesty compels me to make it. Apart from this answer many things about Baptists—things we do not like to face—would be without explanation.

The second answer is: The Bible makes us Baptists. That is the answer I like to give. Thank God it holds true for so many! Baptists are a Bible-believing folk. We like to define our position among other Christian bodies as that of forthright obedience to the Bible. If asked in what respect that distinguishes us from other denominations, we refer the inquirer to the teachings of the New Testament on salvation by grace: the competence of each individual to make his own response to God's call in the gospel of Christ; the church, a body of baptized believers, equal in rank and privilege; and the lordship of Christ in every realm and relationship of life. In my opinion, belief in the teachings of Scripture upon these basic themes makes us Baptists.

Your question is indeed timely. The world is asking of Mississippi Baptists today as never before, What really makes us Baptists?

What Makes A Person A Baptist?

By Reuben E. Alley, Editor
The Religious Herald, Virginia

There is neither a choice of action nor a statement of faith that makes a person a Baptist. The individual chooses to unite with a Baptist church because it offers a fellowship of Christians who believe in the competency of the individual before God through faith in Jesus Christ. The corollary to soul competency is Christian freedom. In this freedom a Christian turns from all creedal forms and turns to an immediate relationship to God as the only ultimate relationship for man.

"What Makes A Person A Baptist"

By S. R. Woodson, Pastor
First Baptist Church, Columbus, Miss.

"What makes a person a Baptist?" In short, I would say an acceptance of, belief in and practice of the teachings of the Bible. However, this brings to our attention immediately, what are these teachings? What is the "historic position" of Baptists in the interpretation of the scriptures? Anyone who has long observed and been a student of Baptist Life will readily answer by saying, Baptists, in general, have sought to interpret it in a sane, prayerful and scholarly manner. This means that Baptists believe that the scripture writers were so influenced by the Holy Spirit, that even in perceiving and presenting new truth, while left to their own thinking to express it, they were supernaturally held back from using the wrong words and were directed in selecting the right words in expressing truths, including those beyond their comprehension. The result — the scripture, as originally given, is the word of God. Baptists have always accepted the Bible as the revelation of God for men. Baptists have, therefore, based their teachings and practices on "what saith the scriptures." They have been willing to accept and practice anything found through a prayerful, reasonable and scholarly interpretation and application of the scriptures. On this basis, they have developed doctrines and practices commonly known as Baptist, which are fundamental and some of which are distinctive; and people who accept and practice these teachings are known as Baptists.

The doctrines and practices, which have grown out of the acceptance of the Bible as the word of God, have become known as the "historic position" of Baptists. This means that one cannot "believe just anything" and be a Baptist. His beliefs and practices must conform to the teachings of the Bible.

We hear the cry "Freedom of thought," "Freedom in interpretation" and "the development of scholarship." Baptists have long placed great emphasis and importance upon these freedoms. However, it must be remembered that truth is truth, and it cannot be changed. Anything that denies the truth of the scriptures, whether it be called scholarship or not, has always been called "heresy" by Baptists. Perhaps much of that which is called scholarship today is not scholarship at all, but is mere human speculation linked to an effort to rationalize the scriptures. Baptists are not afraid of what the scholars will produce, but rather welcome any new light that will enable them to look deeper into the revealed truth of the word of God. It is a common Baptist conviction that nothing yet has been produced that has in any way even questioned the great fundamentals that have long been known as the "historic position" of our Baptist fathers and which are held and practiced by Baptists in general today. Baptists are also confident that nothing will be produced that will challenge this stand.

We conclude by saying that Baptists hold doctrines and have practices, some of which are distinctive, which are Bible centered. They are well known to the masses of the people. They are too numerous to list. The holding of these truths based on a sane, sensible and scholarly interpretation of the Bible "makes a person a Baptist." Baptists contend, therefore, that all writings, teachings and statements should be weighed in the light of the scriptures and accepted or rejected on the basis of their conformity to Bible revelation. Baptists have been blessed of God because they have sought to know, preach and live by these great truths.

What Makes A Person A Baptist?

By Paul Stevens, Director
Radio and Television Commission, Ft. Worth

A Baptist is a person whose spiritual forebears sprang from the teachings of Christ as recorded in the Gospels and the letters which compose the New Testament, and whose present-day belief and walk is as close to that of his forebears as its humanly possible.

Four things distinguish him from other Christians:

1. He became a Christian first by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Later, through conviction, he was baptized by immersion by and on the authority of that Baptist Church.
2. His strongest motivation arises out of a divinely-given sense of missionary compassion for lost men. His churches are characterized primarily by their mission efforts singularly and collectively.
3. He exhibits genuine zeal in his attempt to preserve and live by the Bible as a whole, and the New Testament in particular, as it is interpreted to him by the Holy Spirit of God.
4. The pattern of his beliefs is based upon a unique combination of convictions and spiritually-based truths which are seldom, if ever, found in such combination in the doctrines held by any other denomination.

These four Baptist distinctives, with all their ramifications, set the Baptist apart as one whose search for truth goes far beyond church membership and relates him directly with God's plan of redemption for mankind.

(Continued on Page 4)

The Baptist Record

Largest Circulation of Any Newspaper
Of Any Kind in Mississippi
JOE T. ODLE, Editor

Page 4

Thursday, October 25, 1962

This Special Issue

We bring to you this week a special issue of the Baptist Record containing only articles on Baptist History and Doctrine. We do not know that there previously has been published an issue just like it. This is an experiment. If it proves of value to our readers, we shall probably consider something similar to it sometime in the future.

If Baptists are to maintain their position as a strong, growing, effective Christian denomination, they must teach each new generation their history and the distinctive doctrines that have made them. It is alarming to see how little many modern Baptists know about who we are or what we teach.

The material chosen for this special issue of the Record is for the average reader. No effort has been made to enter into the field of the theologians, or to exhaustively cover the subjects presented. Out of the vast amount of available material, we have chosen a few articles which we believe will be helpful to the average Baptist.

We hope every person who gets the paper will read the history of Baptists by Frank S. Mead. This fascinating story is as interesting as a novel. We first read it many years ago, and have often reviewed it! While (as stated in the Editors' foreword), we do not fully agree with Mr. Mead's words about the origin of Baptists, we do feel that the rest of the story is of such value that every Baptist will be blessed by reading it. Permanent copies may be secured from the Baptist Book Store either as the single Baptist story (THE BAPTISTS), or included in the story of several denominations (SEE THESE BANNERS GO).

The Statement of Faith is a summary of Baptist beliefs. While it is not binding on any church as a creed would be, it is a fair presentation of Baptist doctrines. In this form it was adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1925. A committee is now at work, considering whether it needs to be revised. Copies of the present statement with added Scripture references, may be secured free of charge, by writing the Tract Department, Box 530, Jackson.

When we decided to plan this special issue, about 20 Southern Baptist pastors and leaders were requested to write a brief statement on what makes a person a Baptist. Almost all of the men we contacted have written statements, which, in our thinking, are among the most valuable features of this issue. We hope you will read them all.

The chart comparing the teachings of Baptists with those of other major denominations, is a concise summary of doctrine. It is not, in any way, a criticism of other groups, but a simple statement of their doctrines.

The organization and work of Southern Baptists is presented by Dr. Porter Routh, Executive Secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee. It is also available free in tract form.

There are a number of other articles, all in some way related to the general theme of this issue. Even the pictures have an historical significance.

If this material provides a better understanding of Baptist history and teachings, and if it helps some readers to become stronger in their Baptist convictions and loyalty, we shall feel amply repaid for the labor that has gone into the production of this special issue.

Can Southern Baptists Be Saved

In the September, 1962, issue of Reader's Digest Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, famed pastor and author, writes on the subject, "Can Protestantism Be Saved?" He makes the statement that "Protestantism today is losing ground—not so much in numbers as in spiritual effectiveness." The reasons he gives for the existence of this condition among Protestant churches may be summarized as follows:

1. They have become "benumbed with the idea of bigness." This is the ecumenical movement. Dr. Peale adds that "when denominations merge, they always have to compromise, to weaken their traditional stand."
2. They have made it too easy to join the church, and have not demanded enough of those who were members.
3. They have lost their concern for "saving souls" and are giving more emphasis to the social gospel.
4. The seminaries have "lost the common touch" and "have departed from some fundamental doctrines of Protestantism—and have grown weaker in the process."
5. There has been a "downgrading of the sermon in favor of sacerdotal ritual."
6. There has been the "tendency . . . to doubt the Bible as revelation of the authentic word of God."
7. There has been a departure from expressing "strong convictions."

Toward the conclusion of his article Dr. Peale says, "Can Protestantism be saved? Of course it can! Not by councils or hierarchies, but by aroused, inspired, dedicated individual Christian men and women who have strong beliefs, and are not ashamed of them."

Southern Baptists

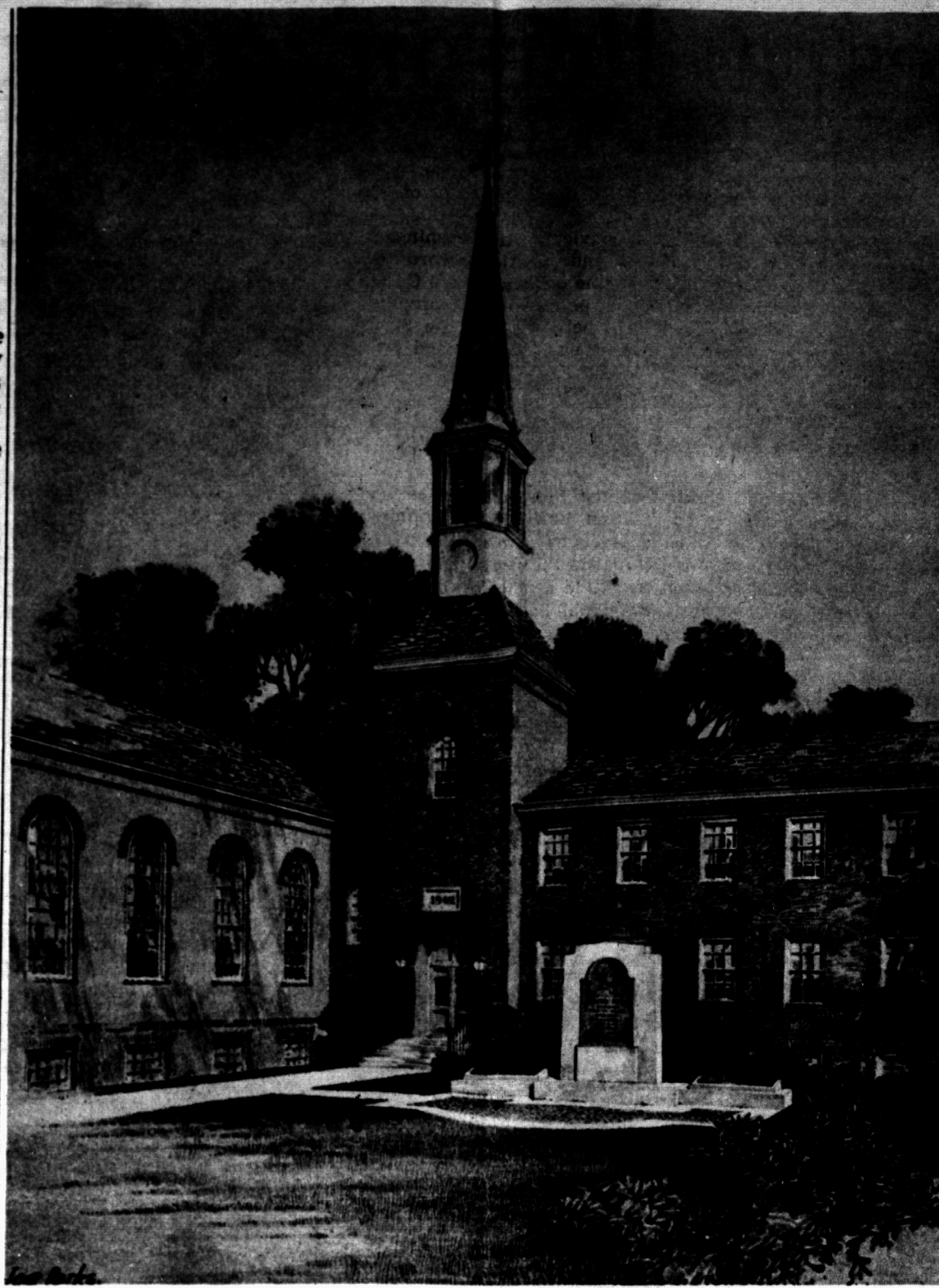
Southern Baptists have not been seriously affected by the present tendency of decline that has hit some major Protestant groups. This does not mean that the same thing could not happen to them. There are some Baptists of today who are expressing fear that such decline may soon begin in our convention. However, at the present time Southern Baptists are continuing to show a steady growth. In the past twenty-five years they have made amazing gains, while many others were leveling off or actually declining in at least some phases of their work. What has been the secret of this continued growth of Southern Baptists?

It is interesting to note the causes of Protestant decline listed by Dr. Peale. Most of those conditions cannot be charged to Southern Baptists. They have resisted all efforts to enlist them in the ecumenical movements. They have continued to major on "saving souls" of individuals, and have given emphasis to the "social gospel" only as it related to personal regeneration. The seminaries have not been too seriously affected by liberalism. (At the present time Southern Baptists are engaged in convention effort to safeguard the seminaries from the inroads of liberalism.) Southern Baptist have kept the pulpit at the center of their program, and very little sacerdotal ritualism has crept in anywhere. They continue to hold a strong belief in the Bible as the divinely inspired Word of God. They have stood steadfastly by their doctrinal convictions, being perfectly willing to be called narrow and bigoted for doing so. If they have failed in any point it has been in the matter of not making great enough demands on membership, but even in that they have doctrinally held to a regenerate church membership, made up only of those who have professed faith in Christ.

A Lesson for Baptists?

Is there a lesson for Southern Baptists in the Peale article? If these conditions listed by Dr. Peale as the cause of the decline of Protestantism, are not found among Southern Baptists, does that explain Southern Baptist strength and continued growth? Can any other conclusion be drawn than that this is the very factor that has made our witness continue its effectiveness? It is our conviction that this is true, and that the future of Southern Baptists depends upon our continuing along the path we have been traveling.

There are some among us who fear that Southern Bapt-



MONUMENT TO LUTHER RICE — The Brotherhood Commission at its annual meeting voted to erect a \$5,000 monument to Luther Rice, famous Baptist statesman, preacher and missionary, in Washington, D. C., as a feature of the Third National Royal Ambassador Congress, Aug. 13-15. The 8-foot monument will stand on the lawn of Luther Rice Memorial Baptist Church. — (Photo by Baptist Press)

tists will divide, or no longer have an appeal to people, if they continue to hold tenaciously to the strict positions they have espoused in the past. It is our conviction that adherence to these principles is the only way that our convention can be saved from the decline that other groups seem to be facing.

If Southern Baptists are to continue to have a strong, effective witness in the present day world, they must continue to be Baptists, without compromise and without apology. The strict fidelity to New Testament principles which has made us in the past, will, if we continue in it, guarantee our future. The promises of Christ are with churches which follow His commands.

Indoctrinate or Disintegrate

(The following is part of an editorial which was printed in the January 19, 1961, issue of the Baptist Record, as an introduction to a group of feature articles on Baptist doctrine.)

"We must indoctrinate or we will disintegrate." So wrote H. H. Hargrove in the Western Recorder in 1940. He also said, "Doctrine is the bone of the Christian body. A body without bones or with broken bones becomes a crumpled, helpless, useless mass. A denomination whose constituency is not devoted to its great, vital, distinctive doctrines will disintegrate into helplessness first and finally into uselessness."

If these words were true twenty years ago, they are even more true today. In this day of conformity and doctrinal laxity there are signs of the development of a weak and flabby Christianity. Southern Baptists must not follow this popular trend. One great revival that we need now is a revival of indoctrination. Our people need to know what Baptists believe and why they believe it.

Doctrine is of vital importance. More than fifty times in the New Testament the word is used, and the Scriptures make clear that doctrine is to be preached, that people are to be indoctrinated, and that sound doctrine is an essential element in the New Testament church. The churches were reminded to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

The present century has not been a time of strong emphasis on doctrinal preaching and teaching. In his book *Doctrinal Preaching For Today*, Dr. Andrew W. Blackwood says that doctrinal preaching "has declined in the first half of the twentieth century." He states that "when preachers preached doctrine the church made an impact on the age," and when they did not "the influence of the church and clergy declined." Some Christian leaders are now charging that Protestantism may be declining. Is doctrinal laxity the reason? Is the failure to indoctrinate our own Baptist people one of the causes of the "slump" that some have felt that Southern Baptists have entered?

It is a tragic fact that large numbers of our Baptist people know little concerning the doctrines of our faith. A university student from one of our Mississippi churches, wrote to a member of the church staff asking, "What do we believe? I have been asked by a fellow student what we believe? How many Baptists would be able intelligently to present our basic doctrines? Certainly, we would not expect every member to understand our teachings with the same comprehension of the pastor or a theologian, but we do believe that they should have some knowledge of our doctrines. How can one be a witness for Christ or a worthy church member without such knowledge?"

How can our Baptist people know the doctrines? They must be taught. From the pulpit, in the class room, on the printed page, and in every other possible way the doctrines must be clearly presented if members are to know and understand them.

To be sure there are those who do not want us to say or do anything about beverage alcohol. I recall that when Senator Villas, in 1892, nominated Grover Cleveland for a third term as president of the United States he said, "We love him for the enemies he has made." If you and I let liquor alone, like every other evil thing it will flourish at the expense of right and decency.—Duke K. McCall

The Christian Faith is not a sentimental attachment to an old, old story, but a living experience today. It is not a pious recollection of one who died 2,000 years ago; it is a personal awareness of him now.—David H. C. Read

What Makes A Baptist? . . .

(Continued from page 3)

What Makes A Person A Baptist?

By T. A. Patterson, Executive Secretary
Baptist General Convention of Texas

There are at least three basic doctrines which in my judgment distinguish Baptists from all other groups. They constitute our "historic Baptist position."

The first is the lordship of Jesus Christ. There are many who insist that they believe that Christ is Lord, but they contradict this affirmation by rejecting a part of what he taught. These people need to be reminded of his question: "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46) It would not be inappropriate to ask why call him "Lord" if we "believe not" the things he has said.

The second principle is the competency of the individual soul for God which means the right and the duty of every person to come to God for himself. All forms of "proxy religion," therefore, are to be ruled out. The one mediator between God and man is the man Christ Jesus.

The third truth involves the authority of the Bible. It must be recognized as the final authority on all matters of doctrine and practice.

These doctrines have been stated many times. If accepted and practiced, the other beliefs we cherish, such as believer's baptism, a regenerated church membership, the autonomy of local congregation, and the separation of church and state will flow from them.

When someone quibbles over the question "what is our historic Baptist position?" I get the idea that he is trying to say that Baptists have never been united on their basic convictions. I cannot accept such a view.

—T. A. Patterson

The Historic Baptist Position

By John E. Barnes, Pastor

Main Street Baptist Church, Hattiesburg

There is an historic Baptist position! Although Baptists do not have a creed, other than the Bible, to crystallize into words a stated doctrinal position, we have through our long history held to certain beliefs. The expression of this position is greatly needed in our present day world.

As unanimously voted by the Southern Baptist Convention in San Francisco this year, we accept "the entire Bible as the authoritative, authentic, infallible Word of God."

Baptists believe in "the primacy of the individual." This helps to explain our emphasis on complete religious freedom, separation of church and state, and personal soul-winning.

Baptists believe that salvation comes through a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour. Works follow salvation. They never bring salvation (Eph. 2:8-9). Man's part in salvation is two fold—Repentance and Faith (Acts 20:21).

Repentance is a turning away from sin. Faith is a turning toward God.

We believe Christ gave the church two ordinances—not sacraments. The Lord's Supper was given by Jesus for His followers to observe "in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). The ordinance of Baptism gives an outward picture of what has already happened within a person. Death to sin is pictured as the person being baptized is buried beneath the water. Resurrection to a new life with Jesus is pictured as he comes up out of the water. Baptism is pictorial. It does not save.

Baptists believe the church is independent and autonomous. We follow the New Testament idea of the church which is a local assembly of baptized believers banded together for the furtherance of God's Kingdom.

The great need today is for Baptists to courageously give to the world our distinctive message.

What Is A Baptist?

Duke K. McCall, President

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville

A Baptist is one who has had a saving experience with Jesus Christ. He acknowledges that Jesus is Lord and accepts his personal responsibility for obeying his Lord whose will has been made known through the inspired Bible and the working of the Holy Spirit, the third person in the trinity.

This causes a Baptist either to join or establish a Baptist church which is a fellowship of obedient disciples.

As a fellowship it involves individual responsibility for the common good both spiritual and physical. Thus there is mutual encouragement, exhortation, rebuke, and discipline. The reach of the fellowship is not limited to fellow Christians but reaches up to God, for Jesus Christ is the head of the church. Therefore, decisions are made by the democratic process but only because each individual is responsible for making effective in the fellowship not his personal desires but what he believes to be the mind of Christ.

Obedience in the definition above refers to carrying out the will of God as revealed in the Bible. This includes proper observance of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper but is not exhausted thereby. It also includes stewardship, evangelism, missions, and service to human needs.

As disciples Baptists have the world redemptive purposes of God as their mission. They are brethren with all true Christians but they must ever be bound by their own conviction as to the clear teaching of Scripture and proclaim this truth to all the world.

What I Like About Baptists

By Erwin L. McDonald

Editor, Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

The Baptist distinctives that have particular appeal to me are not distinctives in the sense that they are characteristic solely of Baptists. Any one of our tenets is held by other bodies. But no other one denomination known to me combines all of our tenets.

The Bible, as God's revelation to man, is our first and final authority. But this does not limit the Bible to the King James Version or to any other version. Nor does it mean that we must have one view that all of us agree on as to the message of the scriptures.

We have no pope and none of us claims to be infallible. Each local church is self-governing, but not even a church has either the right or authority to set itself over individual members in any role like that of pope.

We believe that God made each one of us to be in His own image and that there is a line of communication open between each one of us and our God which no man or combination of men can obstruct.

Rooted in our recognition of the fallibility of man and the priesthood of believers in Christ, we hold that each person has an inalienable right under God to search the scriptures for himself and to decide for himself what the scriptures teach.

We believe in the separation of church and state, that neither should be supported or controlled by the other. We regard Christians as being citizens of two kingdoms, the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of earthly government. We are to be good citizens of both, with our first allegiance to the Kingdom of God.

Each Baptist church is a democracy, at least in theory, with each member having a vote and a voice in all church actions.

(Continued on page 5)

Calendar Of Prayer

October 29—Gloria Winstead, faculty, Mississippi College; A. L. McGaugh, staff, Clarke College.

October 30 — Mrs. Margaret Lowrey, faculty, Blue Mountain College; Jimmie Sellers, Baptist Book Store.

October 31—Mrs. Ruth Winstead, staff, Baptist Children's Village; Mrs. Ruth Duncan, faculty, William Carey College.

November 1 — Mrs. Maurice Griffen, Zion associational Training Union director; Mrs. Milton Tutor, Union County associational WMU president.

November 2—Bryant Cummings, Baptist Building; W. P. Davis, Baptist Building.

November 3—Paul R. Jakes, associate, Seminary Extension Department; Marion Leavell, Baptist Student Director, University of Mississippi.

November 4—Mrs. Marguerite Vance, faculty, Gilroy School of Nursing; Ben Goddard, Superintendent of Missions, Wayne, Greene Counties.

IN HIS STEPS by Charles M. Sheldon (Good News, 96 pp., paper, 50 cents)

A "one evening" condensation of one of the classic Christian books of the past half century. If you have not read this book you should do so. Tells what happened in a community when the Christians decide to ask "What would Jesus do?"

THE THEOLOGY OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES by George D. McKinney (Zondervan, 130 pp., \$2.50)

Compares and contrasts the doctrines of the Jehovah's Witness sect with the fundamental Christian beliefs. Also related some of the facts of the founding, historical development, leaders and program of the movement.

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The Baptist Record is a member of the Southern Baptist Press Association, the Associated Church Press and the Evangelical Press Association.

What Baptists Believe

By Penrose St. Amant

Dean, School of Theology
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

The distinctive Baptist witness can best be defined in terms of a combination of beliefs and practices which set forth the things we most surely believe. Let me seek to state each of these distinctives and then frame a summarizing statement.

(1) Baptists believe in the church as a gathered community made up of those who have been baptized following a personal profession of faith in Jesus Christ. This is a belief which stands over against the prevailing conception in Christianity which holds that the church is constituted by all those who are baptized, including infants.

(2) Thus Baptists believe that only those who have come to a personal faith in Christ should be baptized. This grows out of what we understand to be the teaching of the New Testament with respect to the meaning of baptism and the nature of the church. It is interesting to note that Karl Barth has said, "In the sphere of the New Testament one is not brought to baptism; one comes to baptism."

(3) Baptists believe in the lordship of Jesus Christ. The church as the total community of the redeemed and as the local community knows no Lord except Christ. His presence and power come to and through those who respond to His Lordship and are not guaranteed by prescribed ecclesiastical channels, such as sacraments, ordinances, and apostolic succession.

(4) Baptists, therefore, believe that the church as a human community is governed under this Lordship by those who constitute the congregation. Baptists believe in democracy. But it is a democracy which ideally functions under the total claim of Christ. In theological language, the church, whether in the general or local sense, is an aspect of Christology.

(5) Baptists believe that the Bible constitutes the final authority for faith and practice. All doctrinal statements whether by theologians or Baptist bodies and all practices no matter how hallowed are subservient to Scripture. Baptist tradition is subject to and must be modified in the light of our understanding of the Word of God. Every individual guided by the Holy Spirit has the right and the duty to seek the meaning of God's Word for himself here and now.

(6) Baptists believe in individual freedom and in the freedom of the church. This means the right of individual interpretation of Scripture, the separation of church and state, and freedom from hierarchical control. Baptists are opposed to any authority, ecclesiastical or political, which is imposed between man and his Maker. Efforts to coerce conscience by ecclesiastical or political authority are viewed by Baptists as a dangerous trifling with the sacred in human life.

Baptists have sought to take the Reformation beyond the Reformers. Luther and Calvin, recovering significant dimensions of the Biblical faith, stopped short by retaining the idea of a state church into which infants were baptized. Protestantism also perpetuated elaborate creedal statements which tended to be identified with Christian truth. Baptists know that freedom means diversity and tension. But they also know it means creativity and advance. There is a fierce concern in Baptist life for the freedom of the Christian man. Baptists believe in the open Bible and the open mind guided by the Spirit of God.

What Makes One A Baptist?

M. E. Ramsey, Pastor

First Baptist Church, Edmond, Okla.

What a person believes sincerely and with conviction, determines whether or not he is a Baptist. Whether you call it "historic Baptist position" or not, that is what the people now called Baptists have assumed through the centuries. Baptists still take that position.

A Baptist believes there are certain basic doctrines that distinguish us from any other religious group and that these beliefs justify our maintaining a separate existence. Dr. J. B. Gambrell said, "If everything that is Baptist is taken from any one of the Protestant Pseudo-Baptist bodies, what remains will be Catholic. If everything that is Catholic is taken away, what is left will be Baptist."—(Baptist and Their Business, p. 72)

A Baptist believes the Bible (all of it) was written by men divinely inspired; that it has God for its author all of it, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter. —(SBC, 1925)

A Baptist believes the Scriptures are our final authority. The Catholic church has changed the Scriptures in many instances and other religious groups have accepted many of

these changes. Among the changes are: from immersion to sprinkling; from salvation by grace through faith to salvation by works, forms, ceremonies or so-called sacraments in the ordinances; from the security of the believer to apostasy; from a democratic form of church government to the hierarchical form of government; from the primacy of the individual soul to proxy religion; from the Lordship of Jesus Christ to the authority of priest or bishop or pope; from the infallibility of the Scriptures to the infallibility of the church etc.

One must believe, with deep conviction, the teachings of the Scriptures on these matters and practice accordingly and be a Baptist or he may accept one or more of the Catholic changes and not be a Baptist. A person has the privilege of believing anything he wants to believe about the Scriptures but there are some things he can't believe and be a Baptist.

What Makes One A Baptist?

By E. S. James, Editor Baptist Standard, Texas

Documented history proves that from their beginnings the Baptist people have been guided by three fundamental principles that relate the individual to the Scriptures and to God. 1. They have accepted the Bible as the Word of God. 2. They have believed each individual has the right under God to study this Word and interpret it to the best of his ability. 3. They have taught that each person is responsible to God and must answer directly to Him for what he does about what he finds in the Bible.

These principles concerning the individual's relationship to God and the Bible have produced other principles that regulate their relationships to one another in the churches. Consequently, Baptist churches have always held that the government of a local church must be autonomous and democratic. Its membership must be responsible and regenerate. It must keep the ordinances inside and inviolate. These are distinguishing principles. They set Baptist churches apart from other Christian bodies, for there is no other denominational group that holds exactly this interpretation concerning the visible church.

These scriptural views of the church have made Baptists to be rigidly independent and yet aggressively cooperative in true Christian endeavors. Conscientious Baptists accept instruction from qualified teachers, but they will not accept dictation from any human source. To them one member of a church is as important as any other member, be he pastor, layman, or child. As faithful church members they do support their civil government, but they refuse to allow the churches and their work to be supported by it. As citizens they participate in the business of the world, but as a body they refuse to allow the world to participate in the church's business. They recognize their debt to the unregenerate world, but they refuse to accept anything from that world except the unhindered privilege of paying their debt in full through preaching the gospel to all the world.

What Makes A Person A Baptist?

By L. E. Green, Pastor

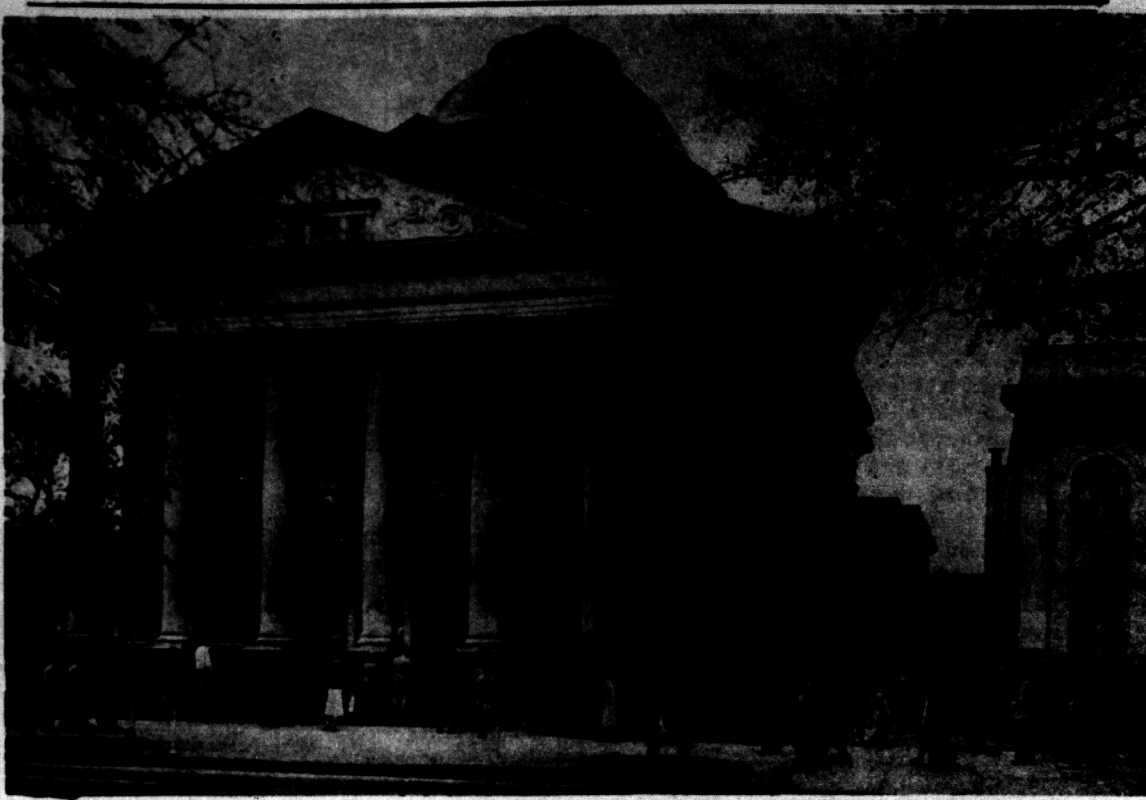
First Baptist Church, Prentiss, Miss.

It is generally known that an informed and intelligent Baptist is usually a person of strong convictions regarding the Bible and what it teaches. But HOW do Baptists arrive at their conclusions of faith? WHAT makes a person a Baptist? One thing for sure, it is not a carnal desire to be different for the sake of being different. Three considerations will help answer the question.

Baptists do not come to the Bible with pre-conceived conclusions and personal reservations that question or nullify the integrity of the Bible as the inspired and authoritative Word of God. When people let ALL the Bible SAY WHAT IT MEANS AND MEAN WHAT IT SAYS, it is amazing how the Holy Spirit brings them to the same conclusions of faith.

The truth of the Bible, being from God, makes it trustworthy and appraised at tremendous value to moral and spiritual character with happy and effective living. To commit one's self to the teachings of God's Word is highest wisdom and the finest objective one can have in life. For the Bible gives the faithful believer a strength of character, a satisfying sense of rightness before God and man in Christ, and a blessedness of peace and security. Therefore, Baptists love the Bible and reverence its revealed truth with a profound respect and sincere appreciation that is held for no other book.

Truth from God known, loved and evaluated for what it is, STIMULATES THE WILL to constrain a person to choose to walk out upon and trust without reservation the teachings of the Bible. The purposed commitment of a person's will to trust and obey God's Word will produce an excellent type of Christian character and a life of assured loyalty to the objects of his faith. People of this type do



THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH in Augusta, Ga., where the Southern Baptist Convention was organized in 1845.

not find liberty to move about and compromise the exacting truth of God's Word whether for the sake of practical convenience or the accommodation of loving friends. However, Baptists respect the right of every person to read the Bible for himself and to determine for himself WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT SAYS. But they rejoice to find so many able and serious-minded people coming to the same assured conclusions and commitments of faith that bind and hold them securely in a substantial denominational fellowship.

Why I Am A Baptist

By Wendell Holmes Rone, Sr., Pastor

Bellevue Baptist Church, Owensboro, Ky.

The subject assigned to me is thought provoking, heart warming, and witness eliciting. I am a Baptist because I was born in a Baptist home, nurtured by a mother and grandmother who were ardent Baptists, had instilled into my mind and heart the glories of a Baptist ancestry, which included over twenty ministers and missionaries. With such surroundings provided by a sovereign and gracious Providence, it was inevitable that I became acquainted at an early age with the ways of Baptists and Baptist Churches. To the influences of a Baptist home were added those of several godly Sunday School teachers and ministers of the Baptist faith. Finally, at the age of thirteen, under the powerful and persuasive preaching of a Baptist missionary who had but recently returned from Brazil due to his wife's ill health, I was brought to the terms of "unconditional surrender" to God in Christ through "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." My boyish heart "rejoiced with joy unspeakable" in the saving grace of God and a newly-found Saviour's love. Obedience to the Saviour's command to follow him in "Believer's Immersion" was not difficult. That same former missionary, now pastor, upon the authority and approval of the Missionary Baptist Church at Livermore, Kentucky, "buried" me together "with Christ" in "Believer's Immersion." I was now ready to be taught to "put into practice" the "all things" of Christ and to "grow in grace." Baptist heritage, nurture, and influences had led me into the initial steps of the life of a Baptist Christian.

I am a Baptist because those early impressions were nurtured by godly pastor's and Sunday School teachers. The Bible, and Baptist papers, such as the *Western Recorder* and *News and Truths*, enlightened and enlarged my understanding of the principles of my faith. This, in turn, deepened my convictions concerning the accuracy, trustworthiness, and scripturalness of them. Times and acts of unfaithfulness in life for a while only served eventually to show how indelibly they were written upon my soul. This was followed, at age twenty three, with another "unconditional surrender" to God's call to "preach the word." The call to preach was a call to preparation. Providence led me to the "School of the Prophets," Southern Seminary, at Louisville, Kentucky. Acquaintance with former "greats" such as Boyce, Broadus, Mullins, and Robertson, and the help of men like Sampey, Carver, Davis, Yates, McKee, Adams, Powell, Weatherspoon, and younger men increased my love for and appreciation of my Baptist people. Twenty-five years of service, spent entire

(Continued on Page 7)

The Baptists In Germany

By James P. Boyce

The late Dr. Oncken assured the writer that in forming a new church at Hamburg, A. D. 1834, the constituent members first resolved that they would shut themselves up entirely to the apostolic model, as found in the New Testament. They therefore devoted themselves for some time to prayer and the exclusive study of that book as an inspired Church Manual; and on comparing the result, to their surprise, they found themselves compelled to form a church in accord with the Baptist churches in England and America. Yet, there is nothing strange in this; the New Testament is ever the same, and it is but natural that when the devout mind is left free from all standards but this, with the determination to follow it in the most simple-hearted manner, it should produce the same stamp of New Testament churches everywhere and always." (Memor of James P. Boyce by John A. Broadus, pp. 149, 150).

Betsy Ross, who made the first United States flag, was a Baptist.

Marginal references in our English Bible were first prepared by a Baptist named John Canne in 1637.

The first of the so-called evangelical churches to be established in India, Bermuda, and Cuba were Baptist churches.

The book that has been circulated more widely than any other volume ever issued, except the Bible, is "Pilgrim's Progress," written by John Bunyan, who was a Baptist preacher.

A HISTORICAL, DOCTRINAL, AND PRACTICAL COMPARISON OF DENOMINATIONS

By WENDELL HOLMES RONE

| Denomination | Founder and Date | Salvation | Church Membership | Final Perseverance of the Saints | Form of Baptism | Subjects of Baptism | Design of Baptism | Design of Lord's Supper | Qualifications for Participating in the Lord's Supper | Worship of the Church | Government of the Church | Officers of the Church | Authority |
|---------------------|--|---|--|--|--|--|---|---|--|---|---|--|--|
| BAPTIST | Jesus Christ 30-33 A.D. Mark 3:13-19 | By Grace through Faith. Regeneration by the Holy Spirit and Sanctification of the Redeemed and Regenerated. | Only those who profess faith and are immersed. | Eternal security of all who are genuinely saved. | Immersion only | Professed believers only | Symbol of the believer's participation in the Gospel. | Symbol of the death of Christ for the believer's sins. | Restricted to immersed believers walking orderly in a New Testament Church Fellowship. | Voluntary—Free Non-Liturgical. Simplicity of the New Testament. | Congregational—Democratic. Autonomy of the local Church. | Pastor Deacons | Bible Only. New Testament Only Law of Christianity |
| CONGREGATIONAL | Robert Brown 1380 A.D. | By Grace through Faith. Regeneration by the Holy Spirit and Sanctification of the Redeemed and Regenerated. | Only those who profess faith and are sprinkled. Infant Baptism. | Possibility of total apostasy. | Sprinkling | Infants, professed believers | A sign of regeneration and profession | A memorial of the death of Christ for the believer's sins. | All who have been Baptized. "Open Communion." | Voluntary—Free Non-Liturgical. Simplicity of the New Testament. | Congregational—Democratic. Autonomy of the local Church. | Pastor Deacons | Bible Only |
| DISCIPLES OF CHRIST | Alexander Campbell 1827 A.D. | Belief, Repentance, and Immersion the completing act in Regeneration. Historical Faith in Christ. | Only those who profess faith, repent, and are immersed for the remission of sins. | Possibility of total apostasy. | Immersion only | Those who have believed and repented | For the remission of sins, necessary to regeneration. | A memorial feast of the death of Christ. Observed every Lord's Day. | Open to any and all the Baptized of all Denominations. "Open Communion." | Voluntary—Free Non-Liturgical. Simplicity of the New Testament. | Semi-Presbyterial. Local church is autonomous. | Pastor Elders Deacons | Bible Only |
| PRESBYTERIAN | John Calvin 1536 A.D. | By Grace through Faith. Regeneration by the Holy Spirit and Sanctification of the Redeemed and Regenerated. | Infant Baptism. All who profess faith and are sprinkled. | Eternal security of all who are genuinely saved. | Sprinkling | Infants, professed believers | A sign, seal or pledge. A means of grace. | A sign of the death of Christ and means of grace. Mystical presence. | All who have been Baptized. "Open Communion." | Voluntary—Free Non-Liturgical. Emphasize part of "Christian Year." Formal. | Presbyterial. Judicial authority in governing bodies. | Pastor Ruling Elders Deacons | Bible Creed Confession |
| METHODIST | John Wesley 1739 A.D. | Gift to all of sufficient Grace. Final salvation to those who improve and co-operate with sufficient Grace. | Infant Baptism. All who desire to be saved and purpose to lead an upright life. Probationers. Baptism by sprinkling. | Possibility of total apostasy. | Sprinkling | Infants, professed believers | A sign of regeneration and profession. | A sign of the death of Christ and means of grace. Mystical presence. | All who have been Baptized. "Open Communion." | Voluntary—Free Non-Liturgical. Emphasize part of "Christian Year." | Episcopacy. Judicial and legislative powers in governing bodies. Semi-Hierarchical in practice. | Stewards Pastors Superintendents Bishops | Bible Creed Discipline |
| LUTHERAN | Martin Luther 1520 A.D. | Sacramental Efficacy of Baptism and Lord's Supper. Nourished through means of Grace. | Infant Baptism. Confirmation, profession of Faith and Baptism by sprinkling. | Possibility of total apostasy. | Sprinkling (Form considered unimportant) | Infants, professed believers | Necessary to regeneration. | A channel through which grace is actually conferred. Consubstantiation. | All who have been Baptized and Confirmed. "Open Communion." | Liturgical to some extent. Formal. Emphasize much of "Christian Year." | Modified Episcopacy. Judicial and legislative powers in governing bodies. | Pastors, Deacons, Trustees in U. S. A. and Bishops in Europe | Bible Creeds, Confession |
| EPISCOPALIAN | Henry VIII 1534 A.D. | Sacramental Efficacy of Baptism. Nourished through Eucharist. Baptismal Regeneration. | Infant Baptism. Confirmation. Acceptance of Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. Baptism by sprinkling. | Possibility of total apostasy. | Sprinkling (Immersion allowed) | Infants, professed believers | Necessary to regeneration. | A channel through which grace is actually conferred. Consubstantiation. | All who have been Baptized and Confirmed. "Open Communion." | Ritualistic. Liturgical. Very formal. Emphasize much of "Christian Year." | Episcopacy. Judicial and legislative powers in governing bodies. Governed by General Canons. | Vestrymen Deacons Priests (Rectors) Bishops Archbishops | Bible Creeds Confession |
| ROMAN CATHOLIC | Gradual Development from 2nd Century to Gregory the Great 300-604 A.D. | Through Church and Sacraments. Nourished through Holy Eucharist. Baptismal Regeneration. | Infant Baptism. Confirmation. All who partake of the sacraments and accept authority of church. | Possibility of total apostasy. | Sprinkling | Infants, all who profess the Catholic Faith. | To effect regeneration. | Instrument of conveying grace. Transubstantiation. | Baptism, Confirmation, Penance. Restricted to members of Catholic Church. | Ritualistic. Liturgical. Mass and confession prescribed. Follow "Christian Year" rigidly. | Hierarchy. Immense religio-political machine. Absolute authority in hands of Pope. | Deacons, Priests, Bishops, Cardinals. The Pope | General Canons Creeds, Councils, Tradition, Canon Laws, an "Infallible" Church and Pope. |

(1) This chart is taken from the author's book, *THE BAPTIST FAITH AND ROMAN CATHOLICISM*. The book is now out of print, but a new edition is planned for 1963.

(2) Based on the position held by many Baptists that no person this side of Christ positively can be named as the founder of Baptists, and the belief that there have been churches in every age since Christ, holding to some of the basic beliefs held by Baptists. There is no claim that churches bearing the Baptist name have existed in every age.

The Baptists - - -

(Continued from Page 1)
found he had been gone three days before; but whither they could not learn." He was three days deep in the forest, on his way to his old friends the Narragansett chiefs. From them he bought a strip of land at the mouth of the Mohassuck River, where he laid out a town. He named his town Providence. A good name, after his months in the forest. Soon his town was a town in fact, filled with sympathizers, rebels, malcontents, exiles, kindred spirits from Puritan towns, who drew up with him a "plantation covenant" under which all were mutually bound to abide by the will of the majority, but only in "civil things." Williams' purpose in founding the colony, he said, was this: "I desired it might be for a shelter for persons distressed for conscience. I then considering the condition of divers of my distressed countrymen, I committed my said purchase to my loving friends. . . . And he meant just that. He put the principle to work around Providence and showed the world, for the first time, that such a government and such an existence was not only possible, but more practical than any other. Doing that, he struck the first body blow at the theory of divine right, built a free government maintained solely on the rights and wishes of the governed, divorced completely Church and State, practiced the ideals of political and ecclesiastical liberty before they were taught in the schools of Europe. He was not only the founder of Providence and Rhode Island; he was "the most provocative figure thrown upon the Massachusetts shores by the upheaval in England, the one original thinker among a number of capable social architects"; he started a movement which rolled like a snowball through the early days of the Colonies, gaining weight and power, coming to rest at last in the first amendment to the Constitution of the United States!

Beginning in America

He was not officially a Baptist when he came to Providence, but he soon took care of that. He had himself baptized by a Mr. Holliman, who had been a member of the Salem church; then he baptized Holliman and ten more. That was the first Baptist Church in America; but it was not, as many suppose, the "venerable mother Church of the American Baptists." No other churches sprang from that group at Providence;

even Williams deserted them before he died. But that does not dim his glory as the pioneer in the fight for religious liberty in the United States; his insistence upon it made of it the first of the five principles laid down by the American Baptist and thrust it into the national Constitution as a national principle.

So dramatic is the figure of Roger Williams that we often miss another Rhode Island Baptist quite as important. Dr. John Clarke was a London physician who came to Boston just at the time of the fury aroused by Mistress Anne Hutchinson, that stormy petrel who dared discuss and criticize publicly the sermons of the Puritan preachers and who professed a direct divine inspiration back of her piercing criticism. That was as bad, if not worse, than the heresy of Williams; out she went. Out to Rhode Island, where Doctor Clarke offered her a home on land that Williams had purchased from the Indians, on Aquidneck Island, and a church to worship in, if she wanted it, at Newport. This church may or may not have been Baptist from the beginning; it certainly was by 1648, when it had fifteen members and Doctor Clarke as a "reading elder." He read well, gained popularity and was sent to England in 1651 to secure a charter for the colony. For twelve lonely years Clarke fought for that charter, and he was refused it until Charles II came to the throne in 1683; then he got a charter which declared that no person should "in anywise be molested, punished, disquieted or called in question for any differences of opinion in matters of religion," provided he kept the civil peace. Then Clarke came home, bowed to the applause of his friends, served two terms as deputy-governor of Rhode Island, retired to private life and died suddenly in 1676, fifteen years before the death of his old friend Roger Williams.

What Williams had started, Clarke had finished.

Baptist Facing Puritan

Distance loaned security to Roger Williams and John Clarke; the long arm of Massachusetts law was not long enough to reach from Boston to Providence. Had all Colonial Baptists settled with them in their free and happy Baptist commonwealth, they should all have been secure. But being Baptists, they could never do that. That audacious principle, to live, must meet the enemy wherever the enemy is. And the enemy, just then, was in Massachusetts. So there they went, to purchase with blood and pain what the men of Newport and Providence had purchased for nothing.

Baptist facing Puritan! That was an irresistible force meeting an immovable object and great was the impact thereof. Thomas Painter of Hingham refused to have his child baptized; he was tied up and whipped. Henry Dunster, President of Harvard, and perhaps the finest president Harvard ever had, refused to have his child baptized, found himself thrust out of Cambridge, tried, convicted and admonished by the General Court. Only his premature death saved him from worse. John Clarke (he of Newport) and Obadiah Holmes spent a Lord's Day with a Baptist brother near Lynn, held a service at the brother's house, were arrested and heavily fined, in default of which they would be "well whipped." A sympathizer paid Clarke's fine, but Holmes was well whipped, unmercifully beaten in a Boston street while a sickened crowd looked on. Holmes never flinched. John Speer and John Hazel shook hands with him on his way to the post and the handshake cost them forty shillings apiece. Stiff medicine, this, bitter gall. It should do the trick, should stamp out this Baptist non-

sense. But something went wrong with the well-laid Puritan plans. With the gall at its bitterest, the Baptists organized one church at Rehoboth, another at Boston. Boston! Like a foolish hen come to build her nest and hatch her chicks next door to a nest of hawks!

Boston

Boston was flabbergasted and Boston was mad. Boston swept down on the Baptist Church in the person of a town constable, who nailed up the doors on the heretics' meetinghouse and posted a notice thereon; the Baptists were "Inhibited to hold any meeting therein or to open ye doors thereof. . . . They would, would they?"

Yes, they would. The nails were pulled in just one week and with them was pulled the power of the magistrates. The Council had played its last card and it had failed to win; it was the last serious Boston effort to halt the Baptists. The Puritan theocracy had broken down; the people were sick of whippings and banishments; in 1691 a new charter was granted by William and Mary, joining Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth into one colony, granting "liberty of conscience to all Christians, except Papists." It was more a measure of toleration than of liberty; the standing order continued until 1834.

New York and Philadelphia

Moving warily, carefully gaining power as surely as a rolling snowball, the Baptists now spread their frontiers from the Boston hub. New York, after a short persecution under choleric old Peter Stuyvesant, soon had churches in New Amsterdam, Gravesend, Flushing, Oyster Bay. Things went handsomely in Pennsylvania; there was liberty for the Baptists here from the beginning, under Penn, and there was a consciousness of strength here which was lacking elsewhere. For mutual edification, "general meetings" were held in May and December; they were devotional meetings, evangelical; preachers came from New Jersey and New York. By 1707, official delegates were being sent and the first Baptist "Association" had been formed. Philadelphia became a natural center of Baptist interests and the "Association" was in a short while the most influential Baptist body in the Colonies, a position it never yielded. So influential was it that it designated, in 1742, the theology which was to typify the whole movement in America; it wrote in that year a strongly Calvinistic confession of faith. That was a turning point, for heretofore the Baptists had been strongly Arminian in theology.

Virginia

Things began to happen on the southern front at about this time. A law had been passed in Virginia setting a fine of two thousand pounds of tobacco on any parent who refused to have his children baptized. That law meant something; it was at first a cloud no bigger than a man's hand, but it grew rapidly into a storm which broke at last not only over Virginia, but over the

whole nation.

At the dawn of the Great Awakening there were forty-seven Baptist Churches from Maine to Florida; all but seven of them were in the North. It was the weakest of the churches; there were not more than five hundred members altogether when Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield were getting under way. With its evangelical emphasis, the Awakening offered a chance to any evangelical church, but the Baptists, strange to say, held aloof from it. Many of their churches closed their doors to Whitefield and the Tennessees; the crowds went to the Congregationalists, to the Presbyterians. But the crowds came back! In spite of themselves, the Baptists found the Awakening a boon. Thousands of the converted found their old churches too cold, too unresponsive to their zeal and they turned to the Baptists as steel to a magnet. Out of the conflict between the "Old Lights" and "New Lights" came a new sect, the Separate Baptists. Not all of those who separated themselves from the old churches became Baptists, but enough of them to make the once despised baptizers a force to be handled carefully. Those old Baptists who had stood out against the revivals of the Awakening called themselves Regular Baptists, to distinguish themselves from their brethren among the Separatists.

Baptist Versus Episcopalian

The Separate Baptists tore the South from the Episcopalians at the very moment when the Colonies were being torn from the Crown. The Continental Armies marched from '75 to '81; the Baptist struggle for equality and recognition was at its fiercest, in Virginia, from '75 to '99. They had entered Virginia in force in 1714, to run immediately afoul of grim opposition by the Episcopalians. The assault on them by the Established Church of the South is the blackest blot on the record of any church in America, and the most inexcusable of all Colonial history. From the granting of the original charter of 1606, which "compelled worship" according to the rites and doctrines of the Church of England, through the awful laws of Berkeley to the hour of the meeting of the First Congress, the Baptists were hounded from one jail to the next, dragged from whipping-post to dungeon without rest or respite. William Weber and Joseph Anthony were locked up in Chesterfield County jail and told to keep quiet. They preached through the bars of their cells to crowds in the streets outside. John Waller, Louis Craig and James Childs were mobbed and brought into court, where a wild-eyed prosecuting attorney cried about the hubbub, "May it please your worship, these men are great disturbers of the peace; they cannot meet a man upon the road, but they must ram a text of scripture down his throat!"

Support From Others

It looked bad for the defendants. Fifty miles away, a young Scotch-American lawyer named Patrick Henry (a good Episcopalian) heard of it, turned red to the roots of his hair, saddled his horse and galloped into town. Waving the indictment above his head in a fury wilder than that of the prosecuting attorney, he roared, "For preaching the gospel of God. Great God! Great God!! Great God!!!!" (He said the same thing, years later, in a slightly different phrase: "Give me liberty, or give me death.") The preachers were acquitted.

More Baptists came to court as the fight dragged on and more were acquitted. Their persistence and fortitude won attention, sympathy, cooperation. James Madison came over to their side; a man named Jefferson, living at Monticello, stopped, looked, listened and said the Baptists were right. A country squire named Washington, living at Mount Vernon, was impressed. Sympathy in such quarters

helped turn the tide. In 1779, the Virginia legislature, stopped forever the taxing of Virginians for the support of an established clergy. That was a hard blow for the Established Church; it tottered, it fell, and as it fell the Baptists rose. Then Jefferson wrote "An Act for Establishing Religious Freedom" and Madison took the stump for it; in 1786 the Act became a law. Virginia has given us presidents; she is "the mother of presidents." But when she passed that law in 1786, which established absolute separation between Church and State by act of government, she made "the greatest distinctive contribution of America to the sum of Western civilization." Virginia did that? Or the Virginia Baptist?

The Revolution

The victory in Virginia was a transfusion of new blood into Baptist veins. It was followed by another. The Revolution raised havoc with the Episcopalians and nearly destroyed the Methodists, but it helped make the Baptists. That was only fair, for the Baptists had been helping to make the Revolution. Some observers (they may be Baptist observers) claim that the Baptists were loyal to a man, that there was not a single Baptist Tory to be found; others admit there were a few, hard to find. Whoever is right, Washington himself told them that they had been "uniformly and almost unanimously, the firm friend to civil liberty and the preserving promoters of our glorious Revolution." That they supported it at all is source for wonder and proof of their Christianity. Not only in fighting it did they turn the other cheek after the jailings and the whippings of Massachusetts and Virginia, but they went farther; they loved their former enemies well enough to die with them on Hessian bayonets. Their principle had conquered again; their devotion to the cause of freedom had caused them to forget old scars, old grudges. A spirit like that could inspire only respect and tolerance. When the war was over, the Baptists couldn't recognize themselves. They were dressed up in brand new clothes. Before the war, they had been small, persecuted groups; after it, they were wealthy and influential as well as respected for writing their principles into the law of the land. They were numerous and aggressive and they had an appeal particularly attractive to the common man, who was right then on his way to high places.

Church-State Separation

They did not rest in the flush of victory; they were not so foolish as to believe that this new nation of theirs was safe for democracy even with the British gone and the Established Church in a state of collapse. The states had as yet to band themselves into a Union; the Constitution was the next step. Presented to the several states for ratification, the Constitution met troubled waters. The Baptists didn't just like that document, for it said nothing of the separation of Church and State. But it was better than none, so they supported it and voted for it. In many states, it was adopted only on the promise that an amendment on religious freedom would be added after adoption. Even with that promise, ratification was doubtful. The states were jealous of one another, dubious of centralized Federal power. Finally, Massachusetts and Virginia became the pivot states in the fight; they must pass it, or the whole thing would be lost. Massachusetts fell into line with an early election and that left Virginia. Now Madison was running for the state legislature of Virginia against a Baptist Elder, John Leland, in Orange County. Madison's presence in that body was necessary to ratify the Constitution and Madison was beaten before the election. Orange was overwhelmingly Baptist; Madison hadn't a chance. Leland knew that. He also knew that without Madison's golden voice and

political influence, there would be no Constitution. So, with victory already in his hand, he dropped out of the race and gave Madison an open road. The rest is history. We call James Madison the "Father of the Constitution." But is he? What shall we do with Elder Leland?

The Amendment

Meanwhile, Baptists everywhere kept talking about that Amendment. A General Committee of the Baptists in Virginia met in 1788 to discuss "whether the new Constitution . . . made sufficient provision for the secure enjoyment of religious liberty." They talked it over among themselves and they talked it over with Mr. Madison and they sent a delegation up to talk it over with Mr. Washington, who was now President. Their reception was cordial, sympathetic. So sympathetic that the Congress, urged on by the President, made it their first business to consider what the Baptists had to say. The first line of the first Amendment, therefore, reads: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. . . ."

It was done. Forever done. Never again shall we have to fight that fight. It was fought for us by the followers of Williams and Clarke; their sons, ten million strong, will see that the works of their fathers will not be lost.

Baptists in 1800

At midnight of January 1, 1800, the Baptists had eleven hundred churches and one hundred thousand members. They had not a single State Convention such as exists today. They were divided into Regular, Free Will, Seventh Day and Sixth Principle Baptists, with no denominational organization to unite them save a few scattered "Associations." Ten of these associations were distinctly anti-missionary in attitude. They had been growing fast; so many new members had crowded into their houses that the walls seemed ready to burst for lack of room. There they stood, on the eve of the era of expansion, with the country on tiptoe for the push to the West, for all the world like a great gawky youngster who had suddenly, unaccountably become a man, quite unaware of his own strength. Or like a great newly recruited, army scattered in disconnected camps. What they needed, that midnight, was a solidifying, a binding power. They found it.

In 1812, while that grand old man-o'-war, The Constitution, was searching the seas for the British Guerriere, two humble little passenger ships were plowing the seas toward India, with the first of the modern army of American missionaries on their decks. Adoniram Judson and Luther Rice, haystack volunteers, were on their way to Calcutta. In Calcutta they became Baptists and Rice returned home to tell the Baptists about it and to gain their support. He toured the country, poking the old fires of neglected missionary passion; he had a good story and he knew how to tell it. The Baptists came out of their "anti" attitude, backed him, sent him flying back to Calcutta to tell Judson to go ahead. He stirred

up or created missionary societies all over the country and gave the Baptists a common cause; for the first time, the young giant of the denominations was to realize his power. "When revolution is brewing at home," said a wise French kind, "stir up a war abroad." That's what had happened to the Baptists, at the hands of Luther Rice.

Triennial Convention

By 1814, the General Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States for Foreign Missions (a big name, but it was a big organization!) was at work. It met once in three years; hence, people called it the "Triennial Convention." Much good came out of Triennial; not only a Foreign Missions Society, but one for Home Missions too, a Baptist Publication Society, an American Baptist Historical Society, an Educational Society and a Baptist Young People's Union. Just for variety, it established a few theological seminaries. Triennial was a loose uniting bond, giving rhyme and reason to the Baptist effort; it was a drum, on which they pounded the step, the beat, the cadence for their march; it created the denominational consciousness so sorely needed.

Westward Ho!

The march now turned westward, following the leaping frontier. In truth, the Baptist led the frontiersman. Sulphur Daniel Boone, that wild man of the western No-Man's Land, had a brother, one "Squire" Boone, who was a Baptist preacher; the mother of young Abe Lincoln was a staunch Baptist and his father helped to build the Baptist Church at Pigeon Creek. Into the wilderness, into the boisterous pandemonium of the wilderness town, rode the Baptist on horseback. Call the roll of the new states (Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Texas, California, Colorado, Oregon) and find a Baptist at work preaching God and building his meetinghouse. No spot was too hard to reach, no town too tough to tackle. Was there drinking and carousing, fighting, gambling, killing, horse-stealing or (which was worse) horse-racing? He fought it, tempered it with his stern code, stood for law and order if he had to stand alone, took the snap, the sting, the poison out of it. When he dropped on the wilderness trail, the churches he'd left behind him carried on.

"Robert Hicklin," says the church book of old South Elkhorn Church, Kentucky, "was

(Continued on Page 7)

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The Baptists . . .

(Continued from Page 6)

excluded from the church for horse-racing." Or, "A charge was brought against Sister Polly Edgington for . . . Endeavouring by tattling to set several of the neighbors at strife with each other. She was excluded for the same." They "also excluded Molly, a black member formerly belonging to William Fitzgerald, for telling lies." But this frontier Baptist congregation was merciful when confronted by honest contrition: Sister Arnett, of Mt. Tactied for drinking. She "appeared to be humble, and very sorry for what she had done, therefore, the Church restore (d) her to fellowship."

It took one hundred years to win the frontier, to possess the West from the Alleghenies to the Pacific. Could it have been won at all without the aid of the circuit-riding? Crude as he was, at times, illiterate and unclean, lips stained with tobacco and tongue thick with white liquor, he was nevertheless the saving salt of the whole situation. He drew the fangs of the rattlesnake-sin of the frontier and got it ready for democracy by establishing that sense of equality which at last took Old Hickory Jackson to the White House.

Dissection

Even this brilliant period of growth and accomplishment had its bad spots. Some of the sheep got to straying from the fold. From 1825 to 1865, there was a mighty exodus from the main bodies out into smaller sects, an exodus, however, which failed to halt the larger church. The greatest achievement of the Baptists for the century was their triumph over the wave of disastrous, destructive and divisive movements which threatened them. There were the Hardshell and Campbell movements, the division into northern and southern Baptists, and the Civil War. Logically, the Baptists should have been shattered by one or the other; actually, they grew stronger than ever. The Hardshell movement (they expounded a stricter Calvinistic theology) and the Campbellites (who held different views on conversion, baptism, etc.) took a cool two hundred thousand members away from the parent Church; yet in 1845 that parent Church showed a gain of one hundred and twenty-six per cent in the South of one hundred and seventy-five per cent in the nation as a whole!

Southern Baptists

Eighteen hundred and forty-five! That was the year when the great split came over slavery. The year before, a pronouncement came in General Convention to the effect that, "If anyone who should offer himself for a missionary, having slaves, should insist on retaining them as his property, we could not appoint him." That was the end, for the southerners. They withdrew, in May of 1845, and founded their Southern Baptist Convention. Would God that great split could have been avoided! Would God the whole ghastly error of the Civil War could have been avoided! It should never have been fought. But it was, and for thirty years thereafter the South lay prostrate in the dust! But look at this: by 1880, there were 1,672,631 Baptists in the South, over two and one half millions in all the United States. A solid million gained in the South, in spite of the war, and 1,337,399 new members gained North and South!

The division of the Baptists into northern and southern groups still stands. While efforts at reunion have come to nothing, there is a *absolute* agreement in doctrine between the two and members are transferred without question in an unrestricted amity. That amity began soon after Grant and Lee shook hands and went home, after Appomattox. Almost at once, as time flies, the Baptists went to work to relieve the real victim of the war. That victim was the Negro. Far from being the benefactor he was intended to be, the black stood at the surrender like a youngster toying with a precious Venetian vase. He had freedom, but he didn't know what to do with it. Carefully the Baptists guided him, in the finest piece of home missionary work in the annals of the Church. They built schools, churches, institutions of all kinds, for his own particular benefit. Some day someone will write a great story—the story of the Christianizing of the Negro in the days of slavery and afterward. And the Baptists will be among the great heroes of the story. Education, they saw, was the remedy and the safeguard against the perils of the liberation; religious education, or education with a religious aim. They have outstripped all oth-

ers in the building of colored schools; in the year of our Lord 1936, the Colored Baptists have a membership of three and one half millions and twenty-three thousand churches.

Education

That religious education was by no means restricted to the South or to this period. The Baptist has always been an educator. In admiring his stand on Church-and-State, we often forget that; we shouldn't, for he has given us too much. He has led the way, from the beginning, in the Sunday-School movement. Robert Raikes, commonly credited with starting it, really started a school which met on Sundays, with paid teachers, for the instruction of the children of the poor in secular as well as religious subjects; the first school in history for the popular study of the Bible by youth was set up in London by a wealthy Baptist deacon, William Fox, in 1783. By 1785, Fox and his Baptist aides had launched their movement on a broader scale, and called it "The Society for the Support and Encouragement of Sunday Schools." The first Sunday School in America, dealing strictly in religious education, was founded at the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia in 1815. The first Sunday-School paper for young people in the United States, the Young Reap-er, was a Baptist production. So were the International Uniform Sunday-School Lessons, which were the work of a Chicago Layman, B. F. Jacobs.

Just to make sure that youth would stay in the Church after Sunday-School days were past, a Baptist Young People's Union (The B.Y.P.U.) was organized in 1891. It rivals Christian Endeavor with a million members.

Other Fields

Then things took another turn. That distinguished European, Visser't Hooft, holds that "the social movement in the Church is the distinguishing characteristic of American Christianity"; one might add that the Baptists have been particularly distinguished in the social movement. The Jeremiah of the Christian social movement in this country was saintly, Baptist, burning Rauschenbusch of Rochester, who knew humanity and therefore loved it, who sat up all night reading books on child labor and went into his classes next morning to drive the piteous cry of the children like white-hot nails into the hearts of his students. And there was Doctor Vedder, who told the terrible tale with his irrefutable historian's logic, who made it so clear that God's will had to be done among the men of earth as well as among the angels of heaven. Thousands of Baptists have followed Rauschenbusch and Vedder in the fight for social and economic justice which has marked the present century. In 1914 they were granted high honors by being named in the yearbook of the American Brewers' Association as one of the chief enemies of the brewmaster and his brew; in 1924, with their churches full of memorial plaques from the World War, they swung an official upercut at Mars with the declaration that . . . the Church must not only condemn war, but must take an active part in discussing and promoting the things that make for peace." A complete about-face, this position on war; a man of snap judgment might conclude that the Baptists, even yet, know not their own minds.

Baptist Contributions

But they do. The Baptist knows his own mind and he has an embarrassing habit of speaking it, quite plainly, when it comes time to speak. He's changeable, yes; what else could he be, in view of his preaching of individual freedom and thought? He's a breed without, beyond the law; he's an irregular, a reckless, restless irregular who cannot and will not fit in. Contradictions? He's full of them; they are moral muscle over his spiritual bone. The Baptists have been patriots, making their homes and digging their graves wherever freedom was denied; they held up the hands of Cromwell and Washington as Hur held up the hands of Moses; they have entered regiments in scores of wars; they sent Sir Henry Havelock to the relief of Lucknow and they sent Sam Houston to Texas;



OLD CLEAR CREEK Baptist "Meeting House" near Washington, where the Mississippi Baptist Convention was organized in 1836. The building was torn down only several months ago.

yet had Cromwell or Washington or Sir Henry or Sam Houston denied God in the interests of the State, the Baptists would have denied them and their lower patriotism at a moment's notice. They have denied the State, time and time again, for a higher loyalty to the Kingdom of God, for a higher patriotism. That's contradiction; we need it. With an anti-missions sentiment strong in certain of their churches, they gave the world Carey and Judson and Rice. Denying infant baptism, they gave us the Sunday School! With many in their ranks suspicious of education, they have presented us with seventy-nine colleges (Bates, Brown, Bucknell, Chicago, Colby, Colgate Denison, Franklin, Vassar), two hundred and fifty (plus) universities and secondary schools and ten seminaries. They have more dollars invested in education, at the moment, than any other church in America. Lovers of simplicity in worship, they have produced an uncouth army of sweet singers in Israel; from the Baptists (can any other church match this?) came Bessie Be the Tie That Binds; The Morning Light Is Breaking; America; Majestic Sweetness Sits Enthroned; On Jordan's Stormy Banks I Stand; Come Thou Font of Every Blessing; Oh, Could I Speak the Matchless Worth; Awake, My Soul; How Firm a Foundation; My Hope Is Built On Nothing Less; Hold the Fort; All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name; Savior, Thy Dying Love; Holy, Holy, Holy; Shall We Gather at the River; He Leadeth Me; I Need Thee Every Hour. If this be contradiction, make the most of it.

They have the strength of numbers. In 1800 they had one hundred thousand; in 1850 they were eight hundred and fifteen thousand. In 1900 they numbered over five millions, in 1934, ten million. (In 1962 - twenty four millions-Ed) That represents power. Power to grow. Power to do things. Power that came to them by no freak of historical chance, but because they had (and still have) the most popular idea in the world and the most effective method of putting it across. They insist upon freedom; utter, absolute freedom. They get it by appealing to the masses instead of the classes, to those who need it most and who will fight hardest to get it. They have never longed for the toga of the State; they have grown up in log cabins and small-town jails; they have a long and honorable record of ministry to the sick, of succor to the lowly. No wonder they have eleven million members around the world. We may as well command the sun to stand still as to command a church like that to stop growing.

The World and Baptists
The world has done its best to stop them; we can trace their history more readily in the bloody footprints of their martyrs than in the ink of their historians. We have tried to shame them by whipping them and they have made us ashamed of our whipping-posts. We chained them in jail and discovered that the other end of the chain was fast about our own necks. We let their blood in Boston and the South, only to find the fairest American fowers we know growing from that very soil. Addelepted world! You tried to stamp them out and all you got for it was to have them leave their stamp on you!

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What Makes A Baptist? . . .

(Continued from Page 5)

ly among the Baptists of Kentucky and Southern Baptists, have been a gift only God could give. The history and heritage of Baptists have been items of my persistent study. I want to pass on this heritage, to those that come after me, reduced neither in quality nor quantity.

I am a Baptist because I believe in an infallible Bible, inspired of God, the only rule of faith and practice. It presents "the faith"—and what I am to believe, and be, and do, and "contend" for, according to the will of God. Christ, the Word of God incarnate, and the Bible, the Word of God, written and inspired and infallible, are supreme authority with me, in matters of faith and practice.

I am a Baptist because I believe in "soul freedom,"—that each person must repent for himself, believe in Christ for himself, be immersed for himself, serve Christ for himself, and finally give an account of his stewardship of life.

I am a Baptist because I believe in a regenerated church membership; a free church in a free state; the giving of the whole gospel to the whole world; a Theocratic-democratic form of church government; the ordinances as symbols of the Gospel; "Believer's Immersion"; "Restricted Communion"; salvation by the grace of God; the eternal security of the genuinely saved; the priesthood of all believers; the primacy of the organized church in Kingdom endeavors; the principle of Biblical cooperation in those endeavors; fraternal equality in the Churches; and love as the supreme law in Christian life. If there are any other good and sufficient reasons for being a Baptist, I unhesitatingly accept them. I feel as strongly on this subject as the colored man, a Baptist, who when asked the question: "If you were not a Baptist, what would you be?" replied to his questioner: "I would be ashamed of myself."

Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you: for in the same manner did their fathers to the false prophets. Jesus Christ in Luke 6:26

Very often the chip on an angry man's shoulder is just bark.

Sin is a short word and it often makes short work of its victims.

DEVOTIONAL

The Only Way To Escape

By Dr. Bob Ramsay, Pastor

First Baptist Church, Brookhaven

Recently there was a story of a man who had taken a plane and flown to several cities—to Las Vegas, Denver, Salt Lake City, Phoenix, and back to Wichita, Kansas. When he arrived at the Municipal Airport at Wichita, he took his life. His family said that he was in ill health and discouraged about both his health and his finances.



Obviously the thinking of this man was characteristic of that mental outlook expressed in the words of the Psalmist, "And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! For then would I fly away, and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. Selah. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest." (Psalm 55:6-8).

There are times when we all would like to escape from the pressures of the hour and the day. Many feel that for them there is no way out. They are 'caught' so to speak in a treadmill and there is no place to stop, no way to get off. Certainly God never intended for his children to become slaves to existence, to boredom, to servitude.

To put this idea into a broader perspective, we may ask, What are people running from today? There are those who are trying to get away from the cares and duties and worries of every day living. For that reason many a man, or woman for that matter, has deserted his family and slipped out of sight. Others are trying to escape God. There are those who refuse to accept Christ as their Saviour and Lord, refuse to admit their need of a Saviour, and even refuse to believe that all some day must stand before Him and give an account of themselves. (II Cor. 5:10a). Still others are trying to escape themselves. They have made such a mess of their lives and living until they want to 'get away from it all.'

Secondly, What are the blind alleys that lead nowhere? Some destroy themselves. A person who had committed suicide in Yankee Stadium left this note, "I am only a peanut, and I'll step on myself for all time." Then there is the blind alley of drink, of various indulgences, plunging here and there, desperately trying to escape from reality. Others resort to travel. But all of these means are nothing more than blind alleys or deadend streets. But the real problem of the Psalmist was a heart-problem, and the way he found his solution we must find ours.

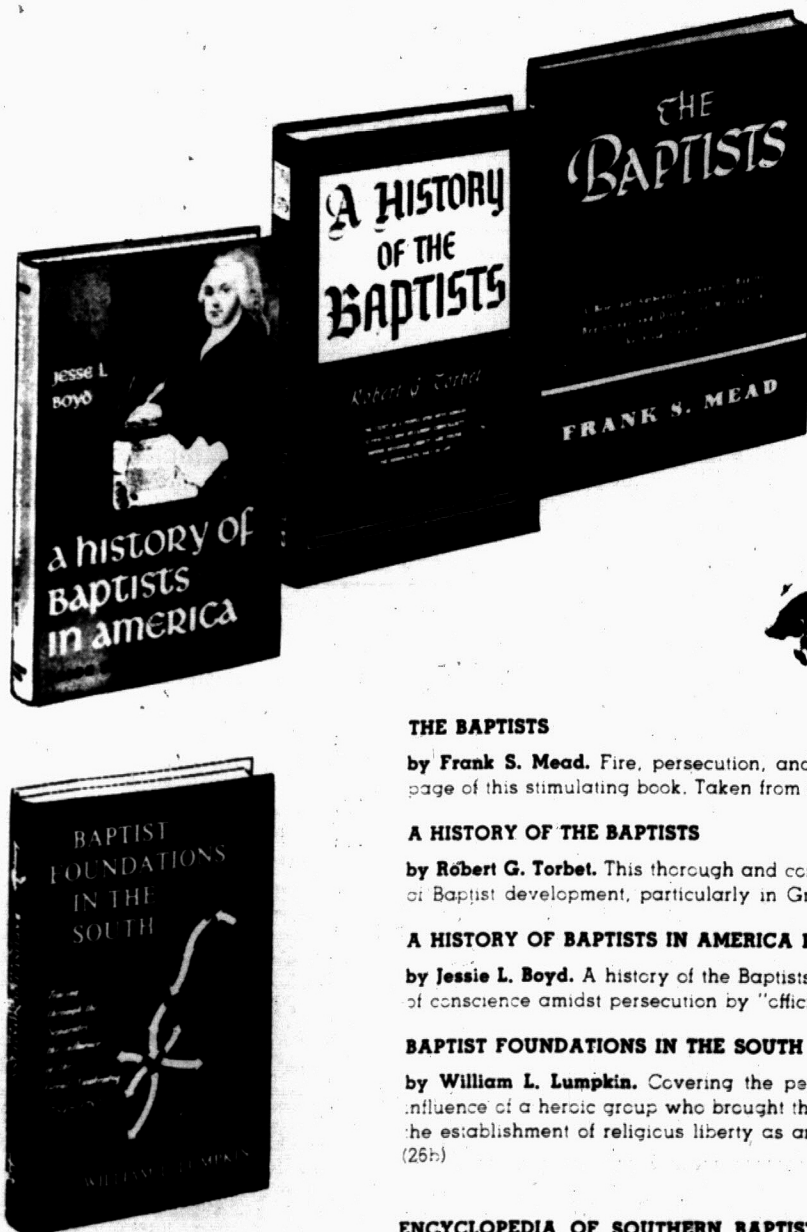
"We took sweet counsel together, and walked into the house of God in company . . . evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud; and he shall hear my voice," (Psalm 55:14, 17). This is our only way out. We come into the captivity of Christ and find life's true freedom.

A missionary, exhausted and discouraged and burdened, went one day and sat down in the chapel to seek strength and help. Presently a native Christian woman sat beside her and urged her to lean on her. She refused at first. Then said the native Christian, "Lean hard, if you love me." Presently the missionary in a meditative mood heard the Master saying, "Lean hard, if you love me."

When we are thinking first of ourselves and our own ambitions, then may we hear the splash of water in a basin and see the Son of God bending with a towel in His hand. Jesus bowed down even to Judas, to try to win him away from the dark deed which was in his heart.—Clifford Ansgar Nelson

One cannot be a GOOD Christian and fail to be a good church member.—C. Earl Cooper

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Get Acquainted With Southern Baptists

By Porter Routh
Exec. Sec., Exec. Committee
Of SBC

Twenty-eight Baptist bodies or conventions in the United States reported 91,455 churches with a membership of 21,374,993 for the year ending December 31, 1960. More than a third of these churches—32,598—and nearly half of the total membership—9,978,488—are affiliated with one of these conventions, the Southern Baptist Convention.

Baptists constitute the largest non-Catholic religious group in the United States. They have surpassed the Methodist by more than eight million, and Lutherans by more than fourteen million and the Presbyterians by more than fifteen million. Approximately one out of every five church members in the United States is a Baptist.

What is the Southern Baptist Convention? How did it get started? What is its organization? How does it do its work? What is its relation with other Baptist bodies and with other denominations?

The purpose of the Southern Baptist Convention, as stated in its constitution, is "to provide a general organization for Baptists in the United States and its territories for the promotion of Christian missions at home and abroad, and any other objects such as Christian education, benevolent enterprises, and social services which it may deem proper and advisable for the furtherance of the kingdom of God."

Technically, the Convention is made up of messengers from Baptist churches who are in "friendly co-operation with this Convention and sympathetic with its purposes and work and have during the fiscal year preceding been bona fide contributors to the Convention's work"; but the Southern Baptist Convention as the term is generally used, is more than a group of messengers meeting a technical requirement.

What Convention Represents

The Southern Baptist Convention represents:

(1) A common theological point of view without the imposition of a rigid creedal statement.

(2) An accepted pattern of work without the cold hand of

absolute conformity.

(3) A burning missionary passion, responding to voluntary life commitment and dedicated stewardship.

The matter of co-operation among Baptists in the United States was not something that started with the organization of the Southern Baptist Convention in August 1845. As early as 1707, five small Baptist churches in the Philadelphia area joined together as "an association of messengers authorized by their respective churches to meditate and execute designs of public good."

Reports of the work done by William Carey in India and the decision of Adoniram Judson and Luther Rice to resign their commission with the Congregational Board and join the Baptists in India led to an upsurge of missionary interest among Baptists in the United States and the organization in May, 1814, of the "General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States for Foreign Missions." This "Triennial Convention," as it came to be called, served as the foreign mission board for all American Baptists until the organization of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845.

The Southern Baptist Convention was a different type of organization from the old Triennial Convention in that the various boards and agencies were responsible to the Convention itself, not independent societies. Within the past few years the Convention has written into its bylaws the provision that "the charters of all agencies be elected by the Convention, and that their charters may not be further amended without the prior consent of the Convention." In 1956 the Convention included in its bylaws an action it had previously taken to the effect that "the Executive Committee shall not recommend any percentage allocation of funds for any agency or institution for which the Convention does not elect trustees or directors."

Relationship Outlined

The relationship between the Southern Baptist Convention and the churches, state conventions, and the associations were outlined in a report approved by the 1928 Convention

and reaffirmed in the 1956 Convention at Kansas City as follows:

"The relations between this Convention and other Baptist bodies can be understood in the light of a few basic New Testament principles, as follows:

"The primary and fundamental principle is the direct relation of the individual soul to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. To his own Master every Christian stands or falls.

"All Christian relationships are free and voluntary. To become a Christian is not to be coerced into obedience to Christ, but to choose him voluntarily and freely. Christ's authority is accepted as final for the believer in all things when he is thus chosen freely as Lord and Saviour.

"The relations of the believer with other Christians are also free and voluntary and subject only to the authority of Jesus Christ.

"A church of Christ is a free and voluntary association of believers, in his name, in obedience to his command, and for the carrying out of his purposes.

"It follows that each church is autonomous or self-determining in all matters pertaining to its own life and activities. It is not subject to any other church or organization of any kind whatsoever, but only to Christ and his authority."

"All Baptist general bodies are voluntary organizations, established by individuals who wish to cooperate for some common end or ends in the kingdom of God. This Convention is not an ecclesiastical body composed of churches, nor a federal body composed of state conventions. Churches may seek to fulfill their obligation to extend Christ's kingdom by co-operating with these general organizations, but always on a purely voluntary basis, and without surrendering in any way or degree their right self-determination.

Cooperation Basic Teaching

"The principle of co-operation between individuals and churches and general bodies in pursuit of great common ends is also a basic teaching of the gospel. In all co-operative endeavor the principle of

autonomy or self-determination should be carefully conserved.

"There is no relation of superiority and inferiority among Baptist general bodies. All are equal. All make their appeal directly to individuals and churches. Each determined its own objectives—financial or otherwise—and allocates its own funds to the interest promoted by it. Each defines and fixes its own sphere of activities. But all is done with due consideration and regard for the functions of other Baptist bodies.

"The powers of general bodies are never legislative, but always advisory in their relations to churches, and to each other."

The Convention serves Southern Baptist churches through four general boards: Foreign

Mission Board (1845); Home Mission Board (1845); Sunday School Board (1891); Annuity Board (1918). The institutions operated and controlled by the Convention are: Golden Gate Seminary (1951); New Orleans Seminary (1917); Southeastern Seminary (1951); Southern Seminary (1859); Southwestern Seminary (1908); Midwestern Seminary (1957); Southern

Baptist Foundation (1946) and Southern Baptist Hospitals, New Orleans (1926). Jacksonville, Florida (1953).

The commissions are: Baptist Brotherhood Commission (1907); Education Commission (1916); Radio and Television Commission (1946); Christian Life Commission (1913); Historical Commission (1951); Commission on American Seminary (1924); and Stewardship Commission (1961).

The Committee on Public Affairs was established by the Convention in 1936.

The Foreign Mission Board reported 1,548 missionaries working in 47 mission areas in 1961. There were 183 emeritus missionaries. Southern Baptists have appointed a total of 2,820 missionaries since the organization of the Foreign Mission Board.

Serve Many Areas

At the close of 1961, the Home Mission Board reported 1,975 missionaries and for the summer of 1961 a record 676 student summer workers were appointed, including those sponsored by Baptist Student Unions. The missionaries work among language groups, in rescue missions, in Cuba, in Pan-

ama and the Canal Zone, in Alaska, in the development of pioneer missions, and in joint development of mission programs with state mission boards. The Home Mission Board also has responsibility for the Department of Evangelism, for Jewish work, for work with the chaplains, and for the administration of church loan funds.

The Sunday School Board does not receive funds through the Cooperative Program but is responsible to the Convention for its operation. It is charged with the responsibility for the publication of literature and books, for the discovery and development of education and service for use in the churches, and for the operation of the Baptist Book Store and the summer assemblies at Ridgecrest, North Carolina, and Glorieta, New Mexico. The Sunday School Board reported 1,408 employees, of whom 850 work in Nashville; the others work in Baptist Book Stores in other cities and at the two assemblies.

By action of the 1960 session of the Southern Baptist Convention, the Relief and Annuity Board became the Annuity Board. It receives funds through the Cooperative Program only for the relief of and aid to retired ministers and their widows. The Cooperative Program makes \$300,000 a year available for this needed ministry. The Annuity Board also administers the various plans for pastors and denominational employees.

The Executive Committee acts for the Convention and interm "in all matters not otherwise provided for." It is "the executive agency of the Convention in all of its affairs not specifically committed to some other board or agency."

The Executive Committee has the responsibility for arranging the meetings of the Convention, acting in an advisory capacity in questions of co-operation between the different agencies of the Convention, presenting to the Convention each year a consolidated financial statement of all agencies, and recommending to the Convention a budget for the Convention and all its agencies.

The Executive Committee is

also charged with the responsibility of conducting the general work of publicity and promotion for the Convention, in co-operation with the other agencies and institutions. It has no authority to control or direct the boards of the Convention but it is instructed to study the affairs of the various agencies and to make sure recommendations to them, or to the Convention concerning them, as it deems advisable.

The Southern Baptist Convention believes in co-operation. It co-operates with the American Bible Society, with various temperance organizations, and with groups in special programs; but it is not a member of either the National Council of Churches or the World Council of Churches.

The decision not to join these organizations has been based on (1) the concept that the Convention cannot take an action which would commit an individual congregation and (2) a feeling on the part of a great majority of Southern Baptists that the leaders of this movement are working toward church union, through the process of finding a common denominator of broad generalizations to replace positive convictions regarding the teachings of the Bible.

Southern Baptists are a participating group in the Baptist Jubilee Advance, a five year program climaxing in 1964 with the celebration of the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the first organization of Baptists on a national scale in the United States.

Dr. C. C. Warren has challenged the Convention to think in terms of thirty thousand additional preaching places—that is, mission churches, mission Sunday schools, and new churches—before 1964. A group of pastors and laymen have been concerned about the failure to do more to send the Christian message to pagan countries.

God has blessed Southern Baptists, but we need to be cautious lest we be overcome by the sin of pride. Organization, plans, programs, slogans, goals—all are important, but most important for Southern Baptists and for every individual is to find and to follow God's will.



Theological Controversies

By Lynn E. May Jr.,
Research Director
Southern Baptist Historical
Commission

The Baptist insistence on the right, competency and responsibility of every soul to search the Scriptures for himself has opened the door to theological disputes across the years. Yet the cooperation and harmony among Southern Baptists astounds outsiders who are aware of their differences and controversies.

The Southern Baptist Convention has weathered many a storm in its 117 years of history. Periodically, controversies have disrupted its harmony and hampered its work. Fear of dire consequences from the current theological situation may be allayed by a look at how such periods of tension have historically led to a stronger, more effective Convention.

Prior to the organization of the Convention in 1845, Antimissionism and Campbellism invaded Baptist ranks, causing heated theological controversy and division. Baptists gradually shut out the discordant elements, surviving greatly reduced in numbers but more thoroughly committed to distinctive Baptist doctrine which opposition had brought them more clearly to understand.

Landmarkism emerged in the 1850's when J. R. Graves advocated doctrines which were extreme or distorted versions of normal Baptist beliefs. Often it was difficult to oppose the positions of Landmarkists without being made to appear to attack some fundamental Baptist tenet. By claiming to be the champion of local church autonomy and restorer of vital practices or "landmarks" of the New Testament church, Graves won thousands of adherents. Landmarkism created dissension, threatened division and jeopardized Southern Baptist life and work for half a century.

The withdrawal of a large group of Landmarkists in 1906 augmented the growth of denominational consciousness and strengthened the Convention for its larger tasks of the 20th Century. Through their struggle with Landmarkism, Southern Baptists became more committed to their own distinctive principles and meth-

ods than ever before.

Whittitt Controversy

The Whittitt Controversy arose in the 1890's. W. H. Whittitt, professor of church history and president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, published an article in which he stated that English Baptists revived baptism by immersion in 1641. Whittitt's documented statement enraged Landmarkists, for it undercut the foundation of the Landmark system, the historical succession of Baptist churches from New Testament times. Relentless warfare was waged on the Seminary as well as Whittitt by some Baptist newspaper editors and correspondents.

The controversy raged in associations, state conventions, the Southern Baptist Convention—whenever and wherever Baptists assembled. The storm subsided only after Whittitt resigned from the Seminary in 1899.

Norriste Fundamentalism disturbed Southern Baptists in the early decades of the 20th Century. Fundamentalism has been described as "a strange mixture of orthodox theology, on the one hand, and frantic efforts to rationalize and reinforce faith, on the other."

J. Frank Norris became the chief proponent of an extreme Fundamentalism among Baptists. Using the popular rallying cry of "Modernism," he made vicious attacks on Southern Baptist leaders and agencies, thus alienating some ministers and churches from the Convention.

The Norriste movement did much damage, engendered bitterness and hindered many Baptist causes.

Major Issues in 1920's

Evolution and Doctrinal Statements became major issues in the 1920's. Incessant attacks, with unproven charges, against Baptist schools and individuals suspected of teaching evolution created controversy that retarded Southern Baptist missionary, educational and benevolent work.

E. Y. Mullins, president of the Convention, and other leaders declared that the major issue was not evolution, but whether Christianity was a natural or supernatural religion. In 1923 the Convention identified itself as a theologi-

cally conservative body by adopting Mullins' statement on "Science and Religion." But antagonists charged the Convention with modernism. Ultra-fundamentalists made sweeping attacks on Southern Baptists. This kind of tactic was typical of such ultra-critics.

Continued agitation of the theological question led the Convention in 1924 to appoint a committee "to consider the advisability of issuing another statement of the Baptist faith and message." The committee, commissioned to report in 1925, consisted of chairman, E. Y. Mullins, L. R. Scarborough, C. P. Stealey, W. J. McGlothlin, S. M. Brown, E. C. Dargan and R. H. Pitt.

Possible Split Seen

Alarmists stimulated concern over a possible split in the Convention. But more stable leaders pointed out that Baptists in the South were "simply passing through some more or less novel phases of a controversy as old as Christianity itself." One wrote in 1924: "There is no occasion for panic on the part of Christian people, no necessity for screaming types or squealing voices in defense of evangelical truth. The issue at bottom in modern controversy has been fought over and over again in Christian history."

Some Baptists strongly opposed the adoption of a doctrinal statement that might be identified as a Baptist creed. Before the 1925 Convention, W. O. Carver declared: "The Southern Baptist Convention has never meddled with such matters at all. To do so is a violation of our history and of our practice." One group in the Convention admittedly desired an official statement so that they could "get at certain 'heretics' now beyond their reach."

On May 14, 1925, the special doctrinal committee appointed in 1924 presented to the Convention a revision of the New Hampshire Confession of Faith with some additional articles growing out of current needs. The committee stated that the "prevalence of naturalism in the modern teaching and preaching of religion" had prompted this "reaffirmation of Christian fundamentals." The committee clarified the

historic Baptist conception of the nature and function of confessions of faith.



Mullins, Stealey Debate

A lengthy debate followed between Mullins and C. P. Stealey who desired adoption of his particular anti-evolution statement. The Christian spirit and clarity with which Dr. Mullins discussed the issue relieved the anxiety of the messengers. The Convention subsequently rejected the Stealey substitute and endorsed the report of the committee by an overwhelming majority.

Continued agitation of the question by those who felt the statement was too liberal provoked a Baptist editor to write that the dispute would end "if we will quit talking about evolution and nursing the bugaboo of infidelity." Controversy raged, however, until 1926 when the Convention adopted President George W. McDaniel's statement:

This convention accepts Genesis as teaching that man was the special creation of God, and rejects every theory, evolution or other, which teaches that man originated in, or came by way of, a lower animal ancestry.

In spite of periodical theological differences and disputes among Southern Baptists, stable leadership in these troubled times helped to resolve the conflicts and keep the Convention true to its heritage and world mission. Periods of doctrinal controversy have proven to be times of tension which strengthened Baptists' convictions and subsequently helped to further the cause of Christ.

No one can cite an instance in history when Baptists ever persecuted anyone for conscience' sake.

Danger Signals

By Paul McCray

In Baptist Standard (Texas)

Nationalism and liberal theology invaded British Baptists and seemed to reach its height in the middle of the 19th Century. Charles Haddon Spurgeon foresaw what this destructive evil would do to evangelical Christianity. He prophetically warned his beloved denomination of the destruction rationalism brings.

He said, "I believe that if we walk uprightly and decidedly before God at this time we shall make the future of England bright with the gospel. But trimming now and debasing doctrine now will affect children yet unborn, generation after generation. Posterity must be considered. I do not look so much at what is to happen today, for these things relate to eternity. For my part I am quite willing to be eaten of dogs for the next 50 years, but the more distant future shall vindicate me."

Spurgeon's prophecy has been fulfilled. Instead of progressing British Baptists have retrogressed. There was a time when British Baptists could boast a constituency of 500,000. Today the number is somewhere between 325,000 to 400,000.

History can teach Southern Baptists a lesson. Some of the same dangers that faced Spurgeon's England face our Southern Baptist Zion! There are definite danger signals to our Baptist distinctives. These distinctives, it seems, some would readily destroy.

The Dangers

One danger is an acceptance of the sweeping claims of the evolutionary hypothesis. Conservatives do not profess to understand how God created the world and man. They are conscious that there are many missing links and, as far as some are concerned, whole chains.

Another danger is a low view of revelation and inspiration. Revelation means that God broke into history and revealed to man something that he could not discover through ordinary mental processes. The Hebrews have left us one great thing. It is not advanced culture or science but a unique concept of God.

It is a low view of revelation that claims the Hebrews bor-

rowed their concept of God from surrounding cultures and then improved upon it.

Secret of Strength

Organic union of the churches is a third danger. One of the secrets of the strength of Southern Baptists is the steadfastness and firmness with which we maintain our beliefs. If we ever come to the place where we say, "It doesn't matter what you believe as long as you are sincere," then we will lose a great deal of our power. This, in essence, is what we would be saying if we unite in an "organic union" of the various divisions of Christianity.

Our "narrowness and exclusiveness" is our strength. Fourth, the teaching that a believer in Jesus Christ can apostatize is a dangerous doctrine. This doctrine contradicts election. How could one who has been elected and foreknown by God apostatize, or fall from grace, as it is commonly referred to?

Alien immersion is a fifth danger. One of the strongest arguments for "closed baptism" is the fact that it maintains a unity of belief.

There are many New Testament churches which do not have the name Baptist, and the writer certainly is not defending the "Baptist succession view (except a spiritual succession). But if churches are to start receiving other baptisms where is the line to be drawn? A church is sovereign. Closed baptism guards the door of the church. Even with closed baptism we have guarded it poorly. It would be even worse if we threw open the door to those from other faiths.

How can we receive those into our churches who have been baptized with the view that their baptism was a part of their salvation? How can we receive those who have not been immersed? We must without apology or shame maintain our distinctive position on "closed baptism."

Denial of Hell

Finally denial of an eternal hell for the wicked is a danger we face today. We do not infer that to be a conservative one must hold a medieval concept of hell or the concept of Jonathan Edwards or that there must be even literal fire. Most

sincere Christians would be pleased and happy if there were to be no suffering, no hell at all; but we have no scriptural warrant to bow to that human reason which states that eternal punishment is inconsistent with a God of love.

The teachings of Jesus Christ are clear. There seems to be not one ray of hope for the impenitent unbeliever in Jesus Christ.

May God help us to heed these danger signals and maintain our Baptist distinctiveness. This pastor is not embarrassed to be a member of an evangelistic group that is called the problem child of Protestantism and a denomination that has not yet matured. If denominational maturity is acceptance of the foregoing claims, may we stay in that adolescence where we have childlike faith in the Word of God. May we continue with the main emphasis that Jesus is Lord and fellowship in many areas with those who do not agree with us on varying doctrines.

But let us maintain our conservative Christianity lest we get on the toboggan that other once conservative denominations are one. If we come to terms with the foregoing suggestions, the death knell has been sounded for a great evangelistic denomination.

Our constitution was founded upon the principles of the New Testament democracy. A knowledge of these principles in practice was gained by Thomas Jefferson from a business meeting of a Baptist church.

Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, in a forty-minute extemporaneous speech at a reception held by a Mall Republic delegation in Moscow, declared that capitalists do not follow the example of Christ. At the same time, he promised "paradise" to anyone following communism. He asserted, "I can quote to you from the Bible. It says that Christ once took a stick and started to chase the traders from the church. That is in the Scriptures." He added that capitalists "thus had no excuse" and said that while they talked about Christian brotherhood, they did "nothing but rob."